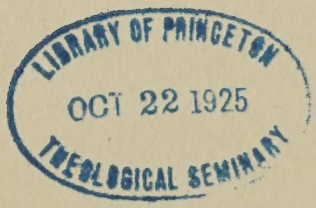

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CHRISTIAN SALVATION

A Modern Interpretation

By
GEORGE CROSS

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY PARENTS

PREFACE

Protestantism is four centuries old. It came to the birth by a revolution that shook the structures of western European civilization to the foundations. On the religious side, Protestantism appeared as a child of the Catholicism against which it arose in vigorous protest. In its inner character it constituted a critical reconstruction of the Christian faith of which Catholicism seemed a misinterpretation and perversion. In the course of half a century there emerged a Protestant morality, Protestant modes of worship, Protestant church systems and Protestant forms of doctrine—all of these more or less truly organic to the promotion of that faith of which they were interpretations. It is with the last of these four modes of Protestant self-expression we are here concerned.

All the early Protestant theologians were at first members of the Roman Catholic Church and received their intellectual training in her schools. If, then, we discover that the presuppositions and the modes of reasoning by means of which they built their own doctrines were, in the main, derived from earlier Catholic thought, it can be no cause of surprise. Moreover, the very doctrines themselves which they advocated in opposition to Catholic views and practices, were largely based on grounds that they held in common with their opponents.

Four hundred years of Protestant life have wrought great changes in our ways of thinking. For example, some doctrines (such as the foreordination of the elect few to everlasting blessedness, while the rest of mankind are passed by) that were once believed to be of divine authority and a mainstay to faith, have become a serious incubus

to the spirit of the Protestant who professes to accept them and a stumbling stone to enquirers. Some others that were thought permanent portions of the dwelling-place of faith, have turned out to be temporary scaffolding and necessarily to be dispensed with in the interest of the faith itself. The fact is, the Protestant Christian faith has been for some time in course of reinterpretation. And necessarily so.

It is not alone the trained theologian or the educated minister of the Gospel that is aware of this, but multitudes of thoughtful laymen as well. It is particularly true of great numbers of the young people who have passed through our colleges and universities out into the active business of life. The self-devotion to a high purpose that is needed to sustain them in life's great tasks needs a better support than can be found in the traditional creeds. In no instance is this more evident than in the case of the doctrine of salvation.

The aim of this treatise is not primarily apologetical but evangelistic. Apologetical it is, since it maintains that the Christian faith is true to the great realities of life and to the world in which our lives must be invested. But the theoretical vindication of one's beliefs is quite subsidiary to the great self-commitments to which we all are called. The finest demonstration of the worth of our faith is given by *living* it. The great tests are the practical. Life is a hazard, a venture. Religious faith is a challenge to make the venture without reservation. My readers are hereby invited to respond to the Christian challenge with an acceptance.

George Cross

Rochester, New York
January 1, 1925

CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE vii

Chapter

I. THE QUESTION 1-17

1. The Universal Longing 1
2. The Cleavage in Our Life 5
3. The Issue 13

II. AN EARLY CHRISTIAN ANSWER 18-41

1. The Markan Interpretation 22
2. The Lukan Interpretation 37
3. The Matthaean Interpretation 31
4. An Estimate of the Early Christian Answer . . . 38

III. THE CHRISTIAN JEW TO THE GREEK . . . 42-69

1. The First Stage—Pauline 43
   (1) Paul's Secret 45
   (2) The Crucified—the Experience of Moral Renewal 53
   (3) The Appeal to the Greek 58
2. The Second Stage—Johannine 61
3. Comment 68

IV. CATHOLIC SACRAMENTALISM 70-90

1. The Eastern (Greek) Way of Salvation 72
2. The Western (Roman) Catholic System 81
3. Comment 89

V. PROTESTANT ASSURANCE 91-111

1. The General Framework of Protestant Doctrine . 93
2. The Inner Certainty of a Right Relation to God . 102
3. The Basis of the Protestant Interpretation . . . 108

VI. THE MODERN PROTESTANT POINT OF VIEW 112-133

1. The Personal Experience of the Better Life . . . 114
2. The Developing Community Life of Protestants . 124
3. The Deepening Insight into Cosmic Relations . . 129

VII. THE BASIC AFFIRMATION 134-156
1. The Significance of the Advent of Personality . . 135
2. The Progressive Fulfilment of Personality . . . 145
3. The Worth of the Life Movements of Humanity . 153

VIII. SIN AND FORGIVENESS 157-179
1. The Meaning of Sin 157
2. The Causes of Sinning 165
3. The Meaning of Forgiveness 169

IX. ATONEMENT 180-206
1. Modern Conception of Government 182
2. The Meaning of Guilt 191
3. The Meaning of Punishment 195
4. The Meaning of Justification 201
5. The Meaning of Atonement 203

X. THE SAVED COMMUNITY 207-235
1. The Universal Relation Between the Community and the Individual 211
2. Christian Faith and Community Betterment . . 221
3. The Christian Contribution to a Higher Order of Humanity 228

XI. THE WORLD TO COME 236-254
1. The Basis of the Hope of a Life After Death . . 239
2. The Significance of the Personality of Jesus . . 245

CHAPTER I

THE QUESTION

The term *salvation* is not often heard in places of business or of industry, on the street or in ordinary social intercourse, but it is in constant use in the place of worship. The idea of salvation pertains to religion. But this does not mean that it has no natural place in our ordinary affairs, or is an exclusively religious term in the narrow sense. For religion is not a luxury enjoyed by the few and denied to the many. It is not something added to the ordinary life of humanity. It would be much nearer the truth to say that the whole meaning of the lives of men is summed up in their religion and finds expression there. Now, the soul of any man's religion is found in his hope of salvation. A message of salvation always appeals powerfully to people because it claims to satisfy the longings that give to their life its true character and worth.

I. MEN UNIVERSALLY LONG FOR A BETTER STATE

The various religions are not merely so many different kinds of belief or speculations about things seen and unseen. They exhibit the means by which men, the world over and all ages through, have sought to obtain something which seems to them worth more than all else. Religious faith never arises out of disinterested reflection, or contemplation. It is always instinct with passion. It takes the field in the hard battle of life when the air

seems full of death and men feel the need of a Mightier to help. It is a confession of a conscious weakness, a felt inability on their part to cope unaided with forces that threaten or imperil their well-being, while at the same time it reveals their strength and true worth. Religion is born of struggle and thrives best in the midst of it.

1. *No man is exempt from these conditions. Throughout the whole of life we are all affected by the hope of good or the fear of ill.* We are never at rest, much as we should like to be. Our spirits are ever in unstable equilibrium. Life is never awanting the spice of danger, never without its lure of blessing. There is always a heaven to seek, a hell to shun. The moment we exclaim, "Peace and safety," sudden destruction falls upon us. The Son of Man is always coming at a time when we expect him not. Seismographers say that a period of freedom from minute disturbances of the earth's crust often portends a sudden and violent earthquake. Bacteriologists tell us that in our physical system, all unfelt at most times, there are constant encounters between beneficent and malignant forces and our life always hangs by a thread. Riches still take wings and fly away. The battle against violence, disease, poverty and sin is incessant. Furloughs in this warfare are short and come but seldom.

2. The *growth of civilization does not seem to lessen our cares.* Civilized peoples do not take life easily. It may be that by reason of improvidence and frequent wars life among savage people is always full of hazard and haunted by fears, and that the more stable conditions of civilization ordinarily diminish the sense of these dangers. But when warfare does break out between civilized peoples all the demons held in leash by the common bonds of

society seem to break loose in more malignant form than ever. Scientific skill imparts to the struggle and the calamities that accompany it an intensity and range unknown to barbarians. The sense of insecurity and the desire for deliverance from it are commonly felt by the wealthy no less than by the poor, no less by the intelligent than by the ignorant. While the forms the danger takes may very well be different, the pain of it may even be accentuated, and the longing for relief may be deeper. The possession of wealth or learning, so far from bringing exemption, may turn out to be very costly in this regard. The cry, "What must I do to be saved?" is, with varying degrees of meaning, universal. A message of salvation will always be welcome. In a world like ours men will never cease to sigh and cry for a Gospel able to comfort the fearful and to heal broken hearts. Is there, then, a universal Gospel to match the universal need?

Of course, one may seem to stand outside the area of our common struggles and say, "These weird terrors have their source in human ignorance and crude fancy. True knowledge is always able to disperse them. There is but one supreme force working irresistibly everywhere. We cannot alter the nature of things if we would and, in the end, we would not if we could. The world rightly goes on its way irrespective of our desires or efforts to change its course." But we do well to remember that besides this supposedly external world that has no regard for our feelings we have to do with the world of inward human experience. This world of human inner life, with all its good or ill, as it appears to our minds, is a very real world. He who professes to stand outside of it thereby admits that he excludes himself from any real experience

of its meaning. Only those who actually enter in spirit into the deep travail of human life, can be trusted to gain a true insight into its mystery. And so, without arguing the matter further, we cling to the simple position that, if human experience be a true witness, our life is full of real hazards. The helpful and the harmful in reality and in prospect confront us everywhere. It is only the indolent, the indifferent and the coward who feel no concern.

3. *The annals of all peoples attest the cardinal relation of our subject to the life of mankind.* All nations set apart certain days in commemoration of past deliverances. They erect monuments to their saviors and hold them in everlasting remembrance. They do honor to the forms of religion that constitute the means of salvation. No matter how philosophical or speculative the doctrines of the different religions, they all have this practical interest ultimately in view and are intended to guard it. On this account they differ greatly in character from scientific inductions or purely philosophical interpretations. These purposely rule out the personal interest for the sake of exactness within the limited field of investigation undertaken at the time. Accordingly, purely scientific inductions or doctrines of philosophy never excite the same hot feelings as are associated with the doctrines of religion or, at least, not until their bearing on the religious interest is made clear. Religious doctrines are invariably the product of men's attempts to gain assurance of the certainty of their hopes of ultimate good. This is true even of the doctrine of the existence and nature of God.

On account of the limits deliberately set by science to its scope, the attempt to use the idea of God as a purely

scientific hypothesis would surely confuse the issue. It is different in the case of religion. Religion seeks an end in which all other aims culminate. Here the practical personal interest is supreme. Interest in the question of the existence of God does not arise so much from a desire to account for the universe in its wholeness as it springs out of the distresses and anxieties experienced by men in connection with actual or threatened loss, or failure, or suffering, or moral miscarriage. No disinterested view of God is possible. God is ultimately to every man the God of salvation.

II. THERE IS A CLEAVAGE IN OUR LIFE

A cleavage runs through the whole of human life. It is found in the depths of the soul of each individual. Men are never fully at one with themselves. Unity is an ideal rather than a fact. Each man's soul is the arena of an unceasing conflict as the lower and the higher forces of his nature wage their constant strife. Intervals of peace when the lower forces are in subjection for a time are soon succeeded by a fresh division and alignment of forces and the conflict is renewed—no longer on the same plane but on a higher, it may be, and yet a conflict as bitter and desperate as those of any previous stage of his experience. In no other way, it seems, is progress achieved.

This conflict within the soul of the man is reproduced on a larger scale in society. Not only because society is composed of individuals who are each the subject of inner strife but also because the individuals comprised in any given society stand on different moral levels. Two contrasted groups to which one stands related may

represent two levels of experience within the same individual, so that the battle waged within him turns out to be a battle between two groups of people with one of which he must at length align himself. Not only individuals, therefore, but communities, as well, rise to a better life only through conflict. The conflict seems inevitable.

The inner struggles of the man and of the group are reflected in their apprehension of the universe. In no age of the past have men been able to look upon the operation of the forces of nature without foreboding. It is quite idle to tell common men that there is no evil in the universe. So long as men shrink from death, so long will they see the universe divided between forces that make for good and forces that make for evil. In the end men always interpret the universe in the categories of worth and unworth that correspond to the character of their own inner life. The inability of men to read into the material system nothing but good is the outcome of a division in their impulses and purposes. The reconciliation of the universe with itself waits upon the inner reconciliation of man with his own true self.

The cleavage in our inner life is found at its greatest intensity in the moral realm. Our intellectual errors and difficulties often cause distraction and pain, but they are not very often accompanied by the deep sense of distress which we feel in the presence of our moral errors. Our emotional conflicts are often serious enough when we find ourselves tossed back and forth between the beautiful and the ugly, the pleasant and the painful. But neither in this case, again, is there the acute suffering that accompanies the sense of blameworthiness, since these other kinds of unhappiness are often traceable to

causes beyond our control. A conflict of mere emotions does not necessarily involve any degree of self-accusation. But the moral cleavage which we experience is a source of the deepest unhappiness because its source is traced to ourselves. When we consider the opposition between the better and the worse within us, the impressive fact is that, while we charge the worse to ourselves, the better is traced to a source beyond ourselves. In the language of religion, "The evil that is in me is my own, the good is from God." It is "not I, but the grace of God that works in me," when I do some good thing. The story of our salvation is the story of the manner in which the one of these forces has displaced the other.

1. *A source of our suffering lies in our bondage to the past.* It is not merely that at times the memory of past deeds oppresses our spirits but rather that we find ourselves in the toils of an unwelcome heritage. We have brought our past along with us and it is capitalized in our present state. Nor is it merely that we fear to break with it, but that we are often impotent to do so. The nobler impulse is so often vetoed by it from within—"When I would do good, evil is present with me." The evil seems to have preempted the land and we find ourselves worsted in the struggle to oust it. The great danger to us all is that we may succumb to the power of the dead hand, that we may abandon the effort to overcome our hereditary self and subside into moral inertness and the love of ease. Pity that we should ever be able to lose that holy discontent with ourselves without which no true betterment is possible!

This moral bondage cannot be overthrown without help from beyond. The testimony of the ages is to this effect.

The self-sufficient man is a vain boaster. His self-complacency is an advertisement of his failure to discern the character of the better life to which we are all imperiously summoned. Deliverance comes truly from a source beyond ourselves. Only when we discover that there is an inexhaustible reservoir of moral power not of ourselves but accessible to us, do we rise on stepping stones of our dead selves to higher things. It is this well-spring of moral energy beyond himself, of which he may partake, that makes a man capable of achieving the superhuman. In this way alone can the dead hand of the past be lifted from our souls.

2. *Our bondage is due in part to moral confusion or darkness.* How it has come about that we do not always know the way we should take amid the issues of life we may not be able to explain but, to our experience, nothing is plainer. Even when we lift our hearts in supplication for light there is often present with us a benumbing sense that we know not what to pray for as we ought.

This, too, is more than momentary or occasional. It is characteristic and typical and, in part at least, a consequence of our past. The experiences through which we have already gone are inadequate for our guidance in the days to come. This is true, not only of our individual experiences, but also of the accumulated thoughts of past generations into which we are introduced by birth and education. These leave us still in the dark when we attempt by their aid alone to solve our practical problems. How often our heritage from the past tends to bind us down to its laws or customs and to make us helpless before the new issues! To accept any of these in a docile manner is to fail at last. The memory of the past becomes

valuable only when it stimulates us to rise above itself to a better future. The moral maxims, like the common beliefs, of the past, need constant reinterpretation if they are not to mislead us. The noblest doctrines of life prove inadequate when they fail to stimulate us to rise to something higher still. New light must be gained constantly or we are lost.

Moreover, every man's problems are peculiarly his own. No solution which other men, or even the whole world of men, could offer can suffice for him. To be satisfied with them is to prove false to himself. Hence, each of us often finds himself in an uncharted sea, and many seem to suffer shipwreck. We may not be able always to tell how the true guidance comes. Even if it be found in the spoken words of a friend or the written words of a book, nevertheless we put into those words a meaning which does not fully coincide with what was intended by him who uttered them. It is an *original* element in the instruction that meets our peculiar need. We can never say, "The darkness is past and the true light now shineth," until there comes to our souls a light that never shone so brightly in the heart of another. We must have immediate access to the fountains of light or at the last we fall into darkness.

3. *Again, the cleavage in our spirit appears as an antagonism of our will toward the better part.* Let us grant that this also comes to us by inheritance. But whatever may be the measure of truth in the doctrine of a hereditary moral character, it is impossible for any man who is awake to the conflict between the better and the worse within him to regard his inner opposition to the better life as purely as inheritance. He recognizes the activity

of his own personal will in the matter. This will of his is no mere abstract quality or attribute of his nature, nor is it a mere impersonal force taking a direction of its own which may be more or less out of harmony with the highest aims of the human life, but it is very concrete and personal. Definite preferences and habits of life, cherished interests, social connections round which the affections twine, and persistent personal ambitions in process of realization become allied and embodied in some definite purpose and determination. These in their unity appear as a compact antagonism of spirit to the new aim to which the man finds himself called. And these *are* the man morally viewed. Under these conditions dangerous qualities of mind develop. The spirit of recalcitrancy to the call of the better life becomes personal antipathy, because that higher life to which we are called is never impersonal but stands before us in the character of some concrete individual. Thus personal enmity and bitterness often play an important part in the strife between the higher and the lower life. Dislike, ill-will, malice arise in the course of the moral struggle and deeds of personal violence are perpetrated. The story of human struggles for the better life shows that it surely takes at last the form of a personal conflict. Even if one may deny that it has been so in his own case and that all he has been aware of is the backward pull of a will, that he must call his own, vetoing the injunction to live the better life, he must acknowledge that the victory for the better life is never won until another will higher than his own becomes active in him. And so, in our best moments we picture to ourselves a great Friend constantly inviting us in spite of our scorn for his approaches to share the riches

of his heart, until at last by his persistency he has won us over to himself and brought us into the communion of his spirit.

4. *The ultimate relations of the struggle are personal.* By the interpretation which Jesus Christ has put upon human life the moral law has become to all who share his mind the utterance of a personal Good Will. On the one hand, all the obligations and duties of life become the invitations of the Spirit of holiness and truth to share his character. On the other hand, all our attempts to fulfil these duties become expressions of our longing to become like him. Thus our violations of the law of rectitude become to our minds offences against the Friend of friends. They become invasions of the rights of all personalities because they are treason to the worth of the Highest Personality. Our sins make us debtors to men because they make us debtors to God.

The unhappiness which a highly sensitive soul feels under such conditions is unutterably great. Hymns, meditations and prayers poured out in abundance through all the Christian centuries reflect in striking figures the agonies of penitents who sought for some assurance that the wrongs of their lives had been righted. In order to relieve burdened consciences of their load churches have resorted to special seasons for the confession of sins and to many other means of peace. These continue in force in many places still, showing how persistent is this need and how distracted men have become under the pressure of it. Making all due allowance for the play of superstitions, fanaticism, and animal fear, we must admit that these things bear witness to an unutterable need of our spirit. He who has no sympathy

with the cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," knows little of the depth of longing for the better life of which men are capable.

4. *Over against this darker side of human experience there is a brighter side*, to which we must refer for a moment in anticipation of later discussions. Among the most sacred and most intimate relations of life is the experience of deliverance from ill. This is, indeed, more significant even than the experience of conflict. Who is there that has never come to an injured friend with broken heart and trembling lip, to confess, "I have sinned against you," and been forgiven? Or who has never heard from a friend this same confession and pronounced the words of absolution? There is a moral sensitiveness, to which a cruel word is as a sword-thrust, that stands forever on guard at the door-step of the soul's privacy and dignity. And if once the spirit of a man finds itself seized of the conviction that it is confronted directly and continually by a Spirit of infinite worth to whom the activities of the human spirit are significant of a self-determined destiny, then this confession is its most fitting self-utterance.

Summarily, then, on this point:

5. *Life for us never simply is.* It is either good or bad. It is bound to become either better or worse. So also, the world. *Moreover life is never simply given to us. We make it.* Its value is found in the quality of the personality whose life it is. The marvel of our powers is appallingly great. It seems not too much to believe that the whole of past, present and future events might ultimately be comprehended in the unity of our personality and the meaning of the whole be disclosed when we discover our own ultimate personal destiny. Thus the days as they

come are hailed either with joy and satisfaction, or with regret and foreboding. The currents of life never run smooth for us and our hearts are always restless. Even the rustling of the dry leaves of autumn or the whispering of the tiny brook in the quiet woods may stir us to ecstasy or to uneasiness. For who knows what good or ill may lurk behind the most trivial events? As life lengthens the range of our interest widens, till we bear the burdens of many and ask for them as for ourselves,
"Watchman, what of the night?" Is the night passing and a better day about to dawn?

III. THE ISSUE

1. It is now evident, I trust, that the question, What must I do to be saved? presents *an alternative* as fearful as it is real. One said centuries ago,

> "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and many are they who enter in thereby. How narrow is the gate and straightened the way that leads to life! And few are they that find it."

This is not the utterance of a frigid pessimism, but the passionate outburst of a breaking heart which had perceived the tragical outcome of many a human life. History recites it, and the newspapers of today daily continue the story. The fact constantly forces attention. Sin and crime, individual and national, are too abundant and too awful to be overlooked or to go unreckoned with. The law's difficulty in keeping the mixed multitudes of our great cities in hand, the treacheries and hostilities that rend society into warring fragments, the desolation

of fair lands and the murder of millions of victims to gratify the brutal lust for power are all too familiar and lie too heavily on our hearts today for us to tolerate an easy-going, optimistic view of life. And we are too familiar with the tragedies that befell ancient culture to permit in us a spirit of unconcern in respect to the fate that may await our own. I do not see how any intelligent man who faces the moral facts can be content to say that all is going well with the great masses of humanity. Mankind is divided. The moment we turn from the contemplation of humanity in general to the concrete lives of the individual men and women whom we know, the fact of failure must be admitted by us all.

At a later point in our study we shall consider the traditional doctrine of a final heaven and hell for men. At present we draw attention to it only because of its significance in relation to the matter now under discussion. The doctrine has had a firm grip on the imagination of many peoples representing different religions. And why? Not because it offers a final solution to the question of human destiny, but because it describes the moral cleavage in human life as widening out into a great gulf. Says Abraham to Dives in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus:

> "But between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us."

The fact that communication is represented as going on across the gulf, shows that the parable does not picture the separation as absolute. But it records the fact that many a man, after he has taken the wrong alternative,

finds the gulf between what he is and what he might have been too great to be crossed. Great is the tragedy of life! But let us believe also that it is not hopeless.

2. *The solution of our question is not simple,* though men often speak as if it were. We freely grant that sometimes men can be encouraged and consoled with a simple answer to profound questions. This may be done when their difficulties narrow down to a single issue, either because the enquirer has fought his way so far through a perplexing situation that the crisis which he is facing has clarified itself to his mind until *one* question alone remains to be answered, or because only a single phase of the complex problem has come home to him. But as every great issue has many ramifications, so every adequate solution, no matter how simple its provisions may be, requires prolonged and careful deliberation before its full meaning can be relatively clear. The way of salvation can appear simple only to one who finds himself face to face with a single issue that embraces all issues for him. But with every new day in his life and with every new generation in the life of a people new forms of the great issues present themselves and the solutions must be given an ever richer content of form. And so, unless "the old, old story" be ever told in a new way, by constant repetition it will become a "letter that kills" and not a "spirit that makes alive." How often creeds by constant recitation become idols that degrade the soul that bows down before them!

The answer to a question may go far beyond the meaning of the question as it presents itself to the mind of the questioner. "What must I do to be saved?" cries out the Philippian jailer to Paul his prisoner. But the apost-

olic answer read into the jailer's question a far deeper meaning than was present to the mind of the frightened man: "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." Here appears an ideal personality disclosed in a human life, a conscious trust in him, a new fellowship in life by the entrance into a personal relation to him—a new destiny. How profound, how far-reaching are the implications of the reply! How different from the old are the new life relations into which an acceptance of the reply would bring the man! The answer which the jailer *sought* would have turned out to be entirely inadequate to his needs.

So must it always be. The very purpose of the Christian message, as we shall see, is to awaken in the minds of men an interest in things hitherto beyond their grasp or their concern. It answers the questions which they ought to ask rather than the precise questions they do ask.

Were we to trace the source of our human fears, beginning with the terrors excited by the mysterious, destructive power of the material world around us, on through man's fear of man till we reach the point where our greatest concern is to master this power of evil within our own bosom, it would become evident that the issue raised by the question, "What must I do to be saved?" is so prodigious that it cannot be fully answered short of a philosophy that is world-embracing. The direction our discussion must take is plain. It must begin with the story of deliverance as it is wrought out in the soul of the individual. Thence it must proceed to regard the life of the individual as a constituent factor in the life of the human community, because it is in the elevation of that

larger unity toward the good which is its final goal that his own salvation is achieved. Finally we must point out the manner in which this larger good carries with it a new interpretation of the universe, an interpretation that reveals a ministry to a good than which there can be none higher. Thus our subject deals with life in all its concreteness, linking the secret movements of men's hearts with all their public affairs and their outer environments. Our study seeks an answer to the call of their need in all the ranges of their life.

CHAPTER II

AN EARLY CHRISTIAN ANSWER

The very term *Christian,* an adjectival form of the word *Christ,* anointed, which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew *Messiah,* reminds us that our religious faith has come to us from the Hebrews through the Greeks. We cannot understand our traditional Christian faith without some knowledge of the manner in which our own spiritual life has been moulded by the influence of these peoples. And it may be that we have derived from both the Hebrews and the Greeks certain ideas of salvation that do not belong intrinsically to the Christian faith and that must give way to ideas more natural to the men of today and more worthful.

The first Christians came from the bosom of the Jewish community and were heirs to its traditions—its oral and written narratives, its religious and ethical spirit, its social and political ideals, and its views of the world. It was natural that the new religious life that came to the birth in the hearts of the first Christians should be interpreted by them according to the ways of thinking prevalent among the Jewish people. It is quite plain that many of the early Christians regarded themselves as the true Jews. It was natural, then, that they should hope at first to win the entire Jewish community to their faith and that when their expulsion from the Jewish religious order showed the impossibility of realizing this hope, they should regard the unbelieving Jews as traitors to the faith of their fathers.

First of all, the early Christians were heirs to the *temper of mind* that had been fostered in the Jew through the century-long, bitter struggle of the Hebrew-Israelitish-Jewish people to maintain their separate existence and national spirit against the fearful military onslaughts and the constant economic and racial pressure of mighty neighboring peoples, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians and the Greeks. Their earlier history became to them the story of the manner in which their God had shown his superiority to all other gods and prepared them for a destiny greater and higher than eye had yet seen or heart conceived. But at the very moment that Jesus of Nazareth was born the heel of the haughty Roman was resting on the neck of the Jews and constituted a defiance to their faith. The early Christian writings reflect in many places the proud determination of the Jew to triumph at last in the name of his God. In Luke's beautiful story of the mothers of John the Baptist and Jesus two hymns are quoted expressing the singers' faith in the purpose and power of their God to "Scatter the proud in the imagination of their heart, to put down princes from their thrones, and exalt them of low degree." They should then be "delivered out of the hand of their enemies and serve him without fear." These Jewish sentiments lingered long in the Christian mind.

Thus the Christian salvation was commonly set forth in the forms of the Jewish hope. The kingdoms of the world were under the power of Satan, the enemy of God and of his people. These were to be overthrown and in their place was to come the Kingdom of God foreseen by the ancient prophets. The world should come to a cata-

clysmic end, eternal destruction should suddenly come upon its evil powers and the reign of God should as suddenly be set up. In this connection there rises the figure of a great Deliverer, the Anointed of God, descending, it may be, from the heavens to establish the new order. Early Christians found the glowing utterances of the ancient prophets and the daring apocalypses of the Jewish seers of a later date suitable modes for the expression of their own confidence that salvation was very near at hand. Sometimes these utterances are ascribed directly to Jesus. At other times they are ascribed to his angels from heaven. Our book of Revelation embraces a collection and revision of these Jewish and Christian apocalypses. Most vivid of all is the picture of the coming downfall of Rome: "Woe, woe, the great city!" "In her was found the blood of prophets and saints and of all that have been slain upon the earth."

But this language, so natural to people enduring cruel persecutions, might seem quite unfitting when the times had changed and the growth of Christians in numbers and power gave them a helpful relation to the life and enterprises of the peoples of the world. We may well ask, then, how far their Jewish inheritance was promotive of the true purposes of the Christian faith.

In the next place, there was the Jewish ritual—the sanctuary, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the prayers and confessions, and the songs. These outward forms were viewed by Christians as more or less suitable to the new faith, which at the same time put a deeper meaning into them. Beside these forms there were also religious and moral instructions of the Jewish prophets and teachers that passed over into the Christian body and made it

profoundly conscious of a moral superiority and of a mission to other peoples. Naturally, the Christian missionary often followed the footsteps of the Jewish missionaries who had made many converts to their faith from among the Gentiles.

And, finally, the early Christians were inheritors of the mental picture of the world that was prevalent in those days among many peoples. Whatever may have been the cosmic philosophy of the great philosophers of old, the common people looked upon the world of nature around them as inhabited by spirits that were friendly or unfriendly to men and that manifested their will toward mankind and their power by coming upon men to afflict or to heal. One's enemies were not merely the men who sought to do him harm, but the evil demons that took possession of the forces of nature, or even of the bodies of men, and wrought out their evil purposes through human sufferings and woe. Death itself was the work of the powers of evil. At the same time, the friends who could come to one's succor were not merely human friends but also the invisible angels of mercy who contended against the evil demons and sought to save mankind from them. Thus the whole of the conflict between good and evil presented to men of old the spectacle of two great armies arrayed against each other in the heavens, on the earth and under the earth. The destiny of men depended on the side which should win the victory. One who would be Savior of mankind must prove his power to range the good beings on his side and to overthrow the hosts of wickedness in places high and low. It is quite in keeping with all this that the narratives of the deeds of Jesus should accentuate his power to cast out and overthrow

all the powers of evil and to summon the angels of mercy to action in men's behalf. But it brings up a very serious question: How far was the true Christian message obscured by these forms of thought and speech? We shall now consider the early Christian interpretation more in detail.

I. THE MARKAN INTERPRETATION

1. The Gospel of Mark is a dramatic representation of the personal career of Jesus of Nazareth. Heralded long before by the prophets and announced as imminent by John the Baptiser, he suddenly emerges into public view. His greatness is declared by the marvels that assemble about his baptism—the sky is cleft, a dove descends, a voice announces his divine sonship. Victorious in a conflict with Satan in the wilderness, his first public message declares the kingdom of God immediately impending. He is to introduce it. As the events of his career unfold, the references to himself grow in frequency and emphasis. His messianic mission, at first stated privately to his immediate followers, is reiterated to the very end, even in his answer to the Sanhedrin that he knew would cost him his life. Quite in keeping is the series of visions, given to his disciples, of the approaching ruin of the Jewish political, social and religious order, of international wars and a final catastrophe.

Mingled with these are other utterances that seem hardly consistent with the common messianic hope. In parables are pictured the unreceptive popular mind, the comparative fruitlessness of his message, the slow coming of the kingdom, and his imminent separation

from them by death. The declaration of the disciples' faith in his messiahship is followed by an injunction to observe silence on the point till he should rise from the dead. He demands of one would-be disciple the total renunciation of natural goods in order to win life eternal. Most of all do we see the contrast when he sits at his last supper with the twelve and tells them that the bread and wine are his blood. There is no messianism of the old order in these words. The personal relation prevails. Not messianic conquest, but vicarious life-giving is to be the genius of the new order. These sayings betoken a spiritual revolution in the minds of his followers. They are the voice of the later Christian community justifying its faith in the Messiahship of a Sufferer.

2. Mark's Gospel registers the early Christian consciousness of a summons to a new and ambitious career. The aims of Jesus are seen to be revolutionary—no putting of new wine into old bottles, no stitching of new patches on old clothes, no subjection to external forms (Sabbath was made for man, not man for Sabbath), no more reliance upon ceremony (not the unwashed hands but the unwashed heart is the serious thing); no mere moralism but personal allegiance, not subservience to authority but the power of achievement, not the keeping of outer commands but the exercise of love. Thus we see that the followers of the Nazarene knew they had the power to win men to a new career like their own. The people whose life is reflected in Mark saw in Jesus the Mighty One of God, and believed that they shared in his power. Emphasis is laid on Jesus' acts of healing. The demons, those evil beings that took possession of men in order to destroy them, shrank from contact with

him and fled at his bidding, for they recognized in him their master. To cast out a demon was to make conquest of Satan, the prince of demons. Such physical healings were also moral conquests, the mastery of sin and evil. If this new power could become the permanent possession of men, all the woe of pain, sickness and even death might be expelled, and the long hoped-for reign of peace and happiness be ushered in at last. To heal the sick, oppressed as they were by the devil, was the same thing as to forgive sins. Reflecting back upon those early days the later experience of possessing a holy spirit, Mark's Gospel ascribes directly to Jesus the warning that he who blasphemes against the Spirit has never forgiveness. When it names as the first of the signs promised to believers after his ascension, "In my name they shall cast out demons," it declares that his mysterious power had become a permanent endowment of his disciples.

According to the Markan interpretation, therefore, Jesus' message of forgiveness had more than a "moral" or "religious" significance. It embraced as well the curing of physical, economic and social ills. We need not wonder that the people who saw him riding into Jerusalem should hail him as son of David, that the ecclesiastical leaders should be scandalized by his healings on the Sabbath and by his defiance of conventional morality in eating with the hated tax-gatherers and despised religious outcasts, or that his invasion of the temple area to purge it of its traffickers should precipitate action aiming at his death.

3. The Markan narrative culminates in the description of the final issue of the struggle with the established authorities. The entire story of Jesus' career is dominated by the thought of the meaning of that struggle. Jesus

appears as no ascetic, no recluse, though at times he sought retirement for thought and prayer, as other serious men often do. He threw himself into the whole life of men and sought the betterment of their state, physical and spiritual, temporal and eternal. While warning men against the hankering after riches and counselling certain ones to renounce their wealth, he rejected the idea that helping the poor was the chief matter. Mark's gospel is not an economic gospel in its central aim. While the economic wrong was the occasion of his interference when he expelled licensed extortioners from the temple grounds, the real ground of his interference was something deeper, namely, apostasy from the Father. Religious despots are the most dangerous and the most desperate. Such men are willing to lose both wealth and honor, if need be, so long as they retain the power to reduce the spirits of other men to slavery and make themselves their gods. Because Jesus saw this despotism standing right athwart the path of redemption for the people he fought it. He knew that the price to be paid for such a conquest would be his own life and he was willing to pay this high price for the ransom of the many. He made a direct frontal attack in the knowledge that the overthrow of the ecclesiastical system would open the way for the kingdom. His sufferings would thus have a universal significance. They would be vicarious and his disciples must drink the same cup as he, the ransom price to be paid by them for the life of the world.

How fittingly, therefore, he is represented as picturing to the vision of his wondering disciples his own enthusiastic anticipation of the future course of humanity, the judgment of all iniquity and the culmination of his pur-

pose in his glorious return to power over all the nations. Of this they were to be ever confident and expectant—"Watch." It is entirely in keeping with all this that he is represented as standing, not many hours later in the chill of the night, alone before his judges and responding to their fatal question with a holy rapture when he assured them that from that day they too must expect to see him sitting in the place of supreme authority and coming to his kingdom in the mystery and majesty of those intangible forces whose symbol is the clouds of heaven.

4. We find, then, in the Markan rendering of the Christian faith a representation of a profound movement that was in progress within the community that afterwards grew up around the name of Jesus and counted itself the organ of his message. Two outstanding convictions characterize this movement. The first was the conviction that the God of the heavens above had come to them with the assurance that the good things for which their fathers had longed, but had died without seeing, were about to be realized. The Messiah who had gone into the heaven would shortly come again to overthrow all evil and establish the everlasting rule of purity and peace. Their gospel was emphatically a gospel of power. Immeasurable possibilities of achievement lay in their faith. There was also the danger that a moody despair might ensue, should these vivid expectations be disappointed, or the equal danger of outbursts of fanaticism in the effort to force an external fulfilment of their hopes. How could a naive faith like theirs long survive in a world pervaded by natural law as we now know ours to be? This question will claim our attention later.

The second of these outstanding convictions is that the personality of Jesus was the basis of the fulfilment of their hopes. So long as the impression made by his career could be kept fresh and strong in their minds—and the written gospel sought to keep it so—their new faith could be preserved and guarded from lapsing into a dead ecclesiasticism or a slavish adherence to some scheme of social and economic reform.

II. THE LUKAN INTERPRETATION

Luke's picture of the career of Jesus is drawn in a greater variety of colors and has a wider background than Mark's. His story is the most beautiful and entrancing that ever came from human pen. If at points the vividness that seems to spring from personal recollections in Mark is missing, the loss is more than made up by new scenes in the great drama, added sayings, their expansion into somewhat regular discourse, and many new applications arising from the experiences of a larger community. The "Christian consciousness" is becoming more explicit. It comes to light in the manner in which the sayings of Jesus furnish the guidance, strength and courage his disciples needed in the battles of life, in the mutual exhortations or open debates of the public assemblies, in their pushing on as with push of pike to the conquest of the world, or in the vindication of their gospel at the cost of their own lives. In Luke we can further decipher the experiences of the saved community. To specify somewhat:

1. The character and purpose of the "kingdom" are now more clearly discerned. The idea of an economic program or a class struggle is distinctly repudiated as a

temptation of the devil. The kingdom was not to be a "bread" kingdom. How keen so ever might be the pangs of the hungry, and how just so ever their claims, their true needs are deeper—"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." This high position assumed by Jesus at the beginning is never departed from. No bread king was he, but the "blessed" hungry ones whom he promised to fill were the heart-hungry who would hear the word of God and keep it. The covetous temper in rich or poor is denounced. Men ought to be "rich toward God." The fate of the rich man who allowed an invalid to starve to death at his door exhibits the vanity of mere wealth. All love of wealth must be renounced, but there is to be no discrimination against the rich—Jesus hesitates not to dine with a wealthy tax-gatherer[1] and commends his resolution to practice justice and benevolence. The Lukan narrative reflects the struggle among the Christians over the question of an economic Gospel and the victory for the higher interpretation.

The inherited Jewish desire for political power is also rejected. Jesus did not envy the Romans the possession of all the kingdoms of the world. To covet it would be to worship Satan[2]. He does not fear Herod[3], that "jackal" of a king who had power to kill because he was a hireling. The stern demand that everything be renounced[4] for the sake of the kingdom, the command[5] to pity and love and heal men and to forgive them without limit, and Jesus' own tears over Jerusalem[6] attest the presence in the Christian heart of those days of such an appreciation of spiritual things as makes ambition for material power, by comparison, devilish.

[1]Lu. 19:1 ff
[2]Lu. 4:5, 8
[3]Lu. 13:32
[4]Lu. 9:23 ff
[5]Lu. 6:27
[6]Lu. 19:41 ff

The danger of falling into a blind fanaticism—so common a by-product in religions—is met fairly. Jesus would not make trial of God by a challenge to nature[1], that was based on the empty expectation of a miraculous interference with its ways. His was not a kingdom of physical marvels. The generation of sight-seekers is evil[2]. The *when* or *where* of the kingdom were not the matter of chief importance, but its inwardness[3]. The chastening experiences of disappointment and persecution were teaching the early community that the miraculous coming of the kingdom was not to be immediate. The story of Jesus' undiscriminating ministry to the needy shows that the Gospel of Luke emanated from a circle of believers who looked for a salvation that consisted ultimately not in a social, economic or political order established by external power, but in the pure goodness of disinterested love.

2. *There is a vivid consciousness of the inward presence of the divine Spirit.* This is, perhaps, the most significant feature of the inner life of the new community—the assurance that all its members were possessed of the source of the grace and power and insight that dwelt in Jesus and in the ancient Hebrew prophets. It was the Spirit of the only God, distinctive, separate, "holy." With Luke this is a very sacred subject. It permeates thoroughly his Gospel and the Acts. All that Jesus Christ has done for men is comprised in this supreme gift. It made every believer an organ of the will of Christ, of God. Possibly the influence of Paul partly accounts for Luke's emphasis, but his conception is less mature than Paul's and represents a less developed religious consciousness. With Luke external miraculous displays

[1]Lu. 4:9-12 [2]Lu. 11:29 ff [3]Lu. 17:20 21

receive much emphasis, while with Paul it is the moral character. It seems likely that Paul was himself indebted to the primitive community for the conviction that this was the secret source of the new power of the Christians. This claim to possess the spirit no doubt often eventuated in outbreaks of fanaticism, and the felt necessity of restraining their excesses led in course of time to attempts to restrict the operation of the gift to regular official orders. But the significant thing we wish to point out is the evidence we see here that the kingdom of God was now being conceived in terms of inward life rather than the terms of a world cataclysm—though the latter never disappeared. In keeping with this, Luke's Gospel breathes a spirit of hope for all men. We are to despair of no man, for the longing for the better life may be found in the breasts of the seemingly worthless, the moral and religious outcasts. The self-satisfied are the unworthy. Accordingly, the coming of the Christ is announced first to the socially obscure who were rich in faith. The everlasting song of peace and good will is sung by angels into the ears of astonished shepherds. This conviction that they had received from Jesus himself the same holy Spirit that gave to his personality its distinctive character, is perhaps the most striking characteristic of these groups of Christians. It is the product of the elevation of soul into which they had come through the knowledge of Jesus' life of pure love, the tragical rejection of him by their fellow-Jews, his awful death and his entrance into the heavenly life eternal. Instead of the desolate sense of separation from God and the burden of guilt there has come to them the certainty of access to him and his inward sustenance of their spirits. The deepest currents of

their life are felt to be from God himself. An astounding richness of inner experience and the spontaneous impulse to utter it and impart it to others embolden them to say that they too are inspired as even the ancient prophets were. The right to speak their convictions has become sacred. They have a commission from Jesus, the Christ, to speak to all the world the things that they had seen and heard. In all this they were partakers of the gift of Christ and were qualified to do the same things as he had done, even to the point of laying down their lives. Healings, exorcisms, raising the dead, and an absolute supremacy over the Evil One were theirs. In the life of this new community, in contrast to the life around them, there stands out, like a great rock rising grandly out of the stormy sea, the consciousness of that inner unity with God which was Jesus' gift. Thus the Lukan interpretation of the Christian salvation prepared the way for the propagation of that Christian mysticism which can be traced down through Paul, John, the mystics of the Catholic church, the Calvinist confessors of the "secret testimony of the Spirit," and the great revivals of modern Protestantism to our own day.

III. THE MATTHAEAN INTERPRETATION

The Gospel of Matthew lacks somewhat of the spontaneity and freshness so characteristic of Mark and Luke. It corresponds with a stage in the life of an early Christian community when they felt the necessity of renouncing definitely every thought of union with the Jewish community. For the new community had to preserve its own true character and at the same time stand firm

against the world. Two features stand out distinctly in Matthew. The first of these is the frequent recurrence of the saying, "That it might be fulfilled," and the other is the emphasis on the fall of Jerusalem. The former registers the conviction that the new faith rises out of the old and at the same time feels itself to have transcended the old. The second points to a divine sentence executed upon a people that had rejected the Messiah and forfeited their place in the kingdom which he had offered them. The Christians were truly the heirs of those promises which the Jews had forfeited by disobedience. Their life was of a higher order than the old, for the revelation that Jesus had given to them was of a purer and holier kind and by its very superiority pronounced against the permanency of the former. The striking contrast between them is set forth in the oft-repeated saying of Jesus, "It was said to them of old time—but I say unto you." Here is, at least, an *implicit* criticism of the Jewish Scriptures in the interest of a higher salvation than the Jew had found. To specify:

1. The new community claimed to be the truly elect people of God. The kingdom of the heavens, foretold by the prophets to the time of John the Baptist and preached since then by Jesus, was theirs. They are the community of God, the depositaries of its priceless treasures, the heralds of its coming in its glory, the people to whom its hidden meaning is made known. They alone are commissioned to speak it to the nations of the world, for to them alone of all men the Son of God, who possesses the secret of the Father, has made it known. Kings and governors are to listen to them and when the hour of testing comes they will not fail of the words they need, for the

spirit of their Father will speak in them. Their light is unquenchable, for "a city set on a hill cannot be hid." We see in them a community saved from the fear of men and from dependence on those things on which men commonly build their hopes.

The pure spirituality of the kingdom in its present state and the inwardness of its wealth are placed in the forefront. Instead of Luke's "Blessed are ye poor," which if left standing alone is open to an economic interpretation, Matthew's version of the sermon on the mount has for its opening words[1], "Blessed are the poor *in spirit*, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It is those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers and the persecuted for righteousness sake who also have their portion in that glorious future. Hence these people practice a strictness of life outwardly and inwardly that altogether surpasses the demands of the Jewish law and they manifest a goodness toward men, even enemies, that is like that of the Father in the heavens, who maketh his sun rise on the evil and on the good alike. Their piety is of the unostentatious kind, known and rewarded by God alone. They think of Him as their Father and are rich in the assurance that He will care for them. They dismiss therefore that warping anxiety that distresses the nations of the world and they concern themselves only with the kingdom. They cultivate lives of trustful prayer and brotherly love and good will. They are warranted in doing this because the Master[2] also, to whom alone the secret of the Father was given, was himself meek and lowly in heart. He bade all the weary and heavy laden place themselves under his yoke and find for their

[1] Mt. 5:3 ff [2] Mt. 11:27-30

souls the rest that he knew so well. So far do these believers attempt to carry this principle of self-renunciation[1] that they consider themselves bound not to make ordinary provision for the clothing and food that will be needed in their propagation of the kingdom. At times[2] they seem to have held to the value of an ascetical view of marriage for those whose interest in the kingdom require such a renunciation. They will not even undertake to defend their lives from the violence of their foes for they have learned from the Master that "all that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

It is evident that this Gospel emanates from no Gentile Christian community. These believers hold fast to the Jewish prerogative, but the significant thing is that, in their view, it has passed away from the Jewish theocracy, with the hierarchy at its head, to them, the true children of Abraham. Hence they emphasize and enlarge upon the Master's words of condemnation[3] against the Jewish cities for rejecting his words and they see in the words of the prophets of old who condemned the contemporary Israelites for blindness of heart a description of their own contemporary fellow-Jews. Consequently, the destruction of Jerusalem[4] is made to emphasize the fearful consequences of unbelief and apostasy. Consequently also, the controversies between Jesus and the Jewish leaders stand out prominently, and a terrible table of woes is given in the Master's own words. On the other hand there stands out the imperativeness that Christians recognize their own high prerogative, maintain an exalted purity, practice brotherly forgiveness without limit, and exercise as the congregation of the "called" that authority, conferred on them by Jesus, to judge one another and the

[1] Mt. 10:9ff [2] Mt. 19:3-12 [3] Mt. 11:20 ff
[4] Mt. 21, 22, 23

world also. Indeed so high is their dignity[1] that the final judgment that is to separate the nations of the world into two divisions and either consign them, on the one hand, to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels, or, on the other hand, to the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, is held to proceed on the basis of their attitude toward these "brethren" of the King who for his sake were so often hungry, or thirsty, or homeless strangers, or naked, or sick, or in prison. At this point there breaks out a deep mystical idea, namely, that he is the Invisible Presence that secures efficacy to their prayers and is to be with them all the days of their lives even to the end. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." This thought, however, is undeveloped, for it does not readily cohere with the belief that he was to come from the heavens at some future time.

2. The Kingship of Jesus is the theme that dominates the Matthaean interpretation. From the outset he is the one who should "save his people from their sins." But there is no distinct explanation of the means by which that salvation should come to them. There is, to be sure, the striking utterance, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many," but the use of the figure of a ransom here does not ground a doctrine of atonement (in the ordinary sense) but only carries to the climax the ideal that he has already impressed on them many times, namely, that the life that is hoarded for its owner is lost and the life that is given for others is saved. If, therefore, they were to have the high places in his kingdom they must drink his cup, so soon to be drained, and minister

[1] Mt. 25:31-46

with his ministry. Unto this, at least, they were being saved. Their outstanding representation of this salvation is the apocalyptical.

The royal dignity of Jesus comes to the front. His genealogy by regularly ordered periods of succession is traced through the Davidic line to Abraham. He came at the appointed time. A new star in the heavens announced his birth. It is at Jerusalem, the seat of government, that the news of the advent causes excitement. Like Moses, he promulgates from a mountain the laws of the kingdom and pronounces weal or woe upon men according as they keep or keep not these edicts of his. The perspective through which this Gospel sees him permits this exalted representation of the homely and tender messages of Jesus. The laws of earthly princes are reversed by his revolutionary teaching and their glories are as nothing compared to the honors that await those who renounce all worldly goods for his sake. His twelve missionaries shall be twelve kings sitting in judgment on their twelve tribes. In the field of achievement "nothing shall be impossible" to them.

We notice, too, that the limitation which Mark allows to Jesus' knowledge as to the day of judgment disappears in Matthew, and instead of the reply to the rich young ruler, "Why callest thou me good?" as Mark has it, we read, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" and instead of "There is none good but one, that is, God," we read, "One there is who is good." The change is indicative of the growing sense that the salvation of the believer reposes on the personality of the Messiah. In the end the Son of Man shall come in his own glory and shall judge all the nations for their attitude toward his brethren.

The death of Jesus is presented as having a cosmic effect, being accompanied by a terrible earthquake and by the rising of many of the deceased saints bodily from their graves and ascension into the "holy city," presumably heaven. At his resurrection there is again an earthquake and a visitation of terrible angels. Finally, before he leaves his disciples his instructions are introduced by the announcement, "All authority hath been given into me in heaven and on earth." The King makes the kingdom. The salvation which the Christian community awaits takes its character from the personality of the Savior.

3. *Comment.* As one tries to visualize mentally the course of the inner life of the people whose controlling impulses and life purposes are set forth in the language of this Gospel it is impossible not to feel a vast sense of exaltation at the thought that they foresaw, as with prophetic vision, that the course of the coming ages, with the inevitable heritage of good or evil, would be determined by the attitude of men toward those profound convictions which held dominion in their souls, and *that they were right.* It is difficult to conceive a state of mind in which a richer evaluation of the homely graces that grow out of the life of love, a more assured supremacy over material conditions, greater sternness of moral decision, deeper devotion to one supreme personality so worthy of their love, and a higher certainty of ultimate and absolute triumph over every ill are united in a single soul. This is the salvation that came to those people whose hearts are laid bare in Matthew's Gospel, whatever may be the value of their theory of the manner in which it would finally come to them, and whatever the defects

which appear in their tendency to asceticism, fanaticism and a censorious judgment of those opposed to them.

IV. AN ESTIMATE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN ANSWER

The manner and the means by which the Christian salvation, as portrayed in the three Gospels, was at length to come, are emphasized with fiery zeal in Jude and Second Peter, and unfolded with graphic power in the Apocalypse of John. These pictures of world-catastrophes reflect the effect on the Christian mind of the terrible struggles of the Jewish people to preserve their national and religious identity amid the overturnings of empires, the bitterness of the internal strife that had marked their religious progress, their anticipations of sudden interpositions of their God on their behalf in the future and their acceptance of the common interpretation of the unusual and the spectacular as specially significant of the divine presence or power.

Cataclysms in nature or in human life marked for them the lighting down of the mighty arm of their God in vindication of his people. The early Christians were nurtured in this atmosphere. Regarding themselves as the true heirs of the Jewish faith and hope, they naturally expected a similar deliverance in their day of trouble. They had not long to wait. The measure of political power which still remained to the dependent Jewish state was soon called into action against the new "sect" by the hierarchy. They were driven from temple and synagogue. When the Jewish rebellion came, culminating in the capture and ruin of Jerusalem, the burning of the temple, and the extinction of the last vestige of their

political power, it was but natural that Jewish Christians should interpret the tragedy as a final divine retribution visited upon a people who had rejected God's Messiah and maltreated his followers. What could be more natural than that amid such scenes they should recall those words of the Master that seemed to them prophetic of these very events and that his sayings should receive such amplification and application as their needs demanded at the time?

When necessity led the Christians to follow into foreign lands the roads which the Jewish Dispersion had taken at an earlier time, when their new faith came into contact with Graeco-Roman life on all its sides and a free and outspoken declaration of their faith brought upon them the suspicions of a Nero or a Domitian on the throne of the Empire, it was natural that their sufferings under the hand of mighty Rome should arouse to activity new prophets who proclaimed the doom pronounced by the Lord Jesus from his throne in the heavens. Rome, too, must fall and, by comparison, the fall of Jerusalem would be as nothing. Then appeared the Apocalypse of John with its symbolic representations of the terrors experienced by the Christians of those days and their anticipations of a speedy and final deliverance. The empire of Rome was the world to them. The destruction of the great city that ruled the nations of the earth must surely usher in the end of human affairs. Let his people note the signs! The day when God would pronounce his final judgment on all wickedness was at hand.

The Christian apocalypses reflect the character of the nervous strain they endured through popular contempt, mob violence, formal arrest, trial, torture, and martyr-

dom. To these was added the discouragement that came through the futile waiting for the end. There was also the rending of private affections by the break-up of families through religious division, the timidity or growing coldness of some, and the fanatical impatience of others. At such a time it was natural that there should be a revival of the spirit of Jewish apocalypticism. The language of the Jewish apocalypticists became their language. Old apocalypses were rewritten, given a new setting and had many new visions added to them. Appeal was made to the anticipative power of the imagination rather than to cold logic or sober fact. Apocalypse is the dramatization of faith. All the new apocalypses disclose the internal difficulties of these early Christians. The very hope that Jesus would return exposed them to the snares of imposters and to the despair that comes from disillusionment. Yet, breaking through all the fetters that bound their faith, there shines out clear and strong the assurance that they would be victors in the end. The elect might be only a little flock but they were to receive from the Father the promised kingdom. Let not the time seem long, for with God a thousand years are as one day. As the times of the Jews had been fulfilled, so also should the times of the Gentiles. God would avenge his elect who cried to him night and day. By this form of faith they were enabled to live through those fearful days.

Throughout these Christian-Jewish apocalypses the personality of Jesus is the central figure. This fact attests the marvellous hold He had upon the hearts of His followers but it also signalizes the early influence of a pessimistic estimate of humanity and of the world inherited from the Jews. The recrudescence of this view of things

in successive periods of Christian history always marks a reaction from the high level of the true Christian hope back to the lower level of a Jewish hope that ought to have been outlived long since. But at the same time we must say that by disrobing the Christian hope of these repulsive Jewish forms we discover back of them the unconquerable confidence of the early Christian that the Nazarene was one day to be the dominant power in the life of humanity, lifting it to the level of the divine. The story even of the material world itself would become the story of a human conquest of its wonders and its secret powers.

CHAPTER III

THE CHRISTIAN JEW TO THE GREEK

Stress of circumstances and the zeal characteristic of a new faith united to drive the spokesmen of the Christian Gospel far afield. Ere long it was seeking a home for itself in the vast Graeco-Roman world. But what would be the fate of the religion of simple-minded Galilean countrymen when it was cast into the huge amalgam of races, customs and traditions that survived in that Rome-conquered world. After, possibly, arousing a passing interest in the minds of some who might be seeking compensation for the ruin of past hopes under the feet of their conquerors, it would promptly begin a course of deterioration and surely lose its distinctive character by absorption into the ethnic faiths that preceded it in those lands, or it would turn by reaction in the direction of that Jewish faith which it professed to supersede.

That neither of these spiritual tragedies occurred was mainly due, it would seem, to the timely conversion of Saul, of Tarsus, the Pharisee who was to become the great Christian missionary. At the same time, it is quite possible—the epistles that bear his name suggest it—that the very success which he achieved was owing to the fact that in the awakened soul of this man the secret thoughts of many hearts were being revealed. At any rate, the most significant thing that appears in his career and his writings is the creation of a new religious community that reflected the quality of his great soul. The

Pauline message represents the first stage of the transition from the Jewish to the Greek interpretation of salvation. A second stage appears in the writings of the Johannine type. In the literature that represents this second stage a great spiritual revolution comes to light. Even where the old phraseology is mixed with the new the old meaning has been transformed or lost.

THE FIRST STAGE

THE PAULINE INTERPRETATION

Like the early Christian message to the Jew, Paul's message to the Gentile centered in the idea of a divinely wrought deliverance. Salvation was the key-note. But the meaning of salvation, to him and his hearers, is the significant thing. Was it expressed in ways native to their thinking as well as to his? Or was there rather a carrying over into alien minds of forms of speech and act that left the inward mind of his hearers pretty much as it was before they heard him? Was his thinking really of the same character as it had been before, or did the contact with a new world transmute it into a new and original message as far as he was concerned?

That Paul wished at first to give himself to the task of converting his fellow-Jews to the new faith is perfectly plain. That he met with ill success among them but won his way to the hearts of many Gentiles is equally plain. The explanation is to be found in his epistles. When they are placed side by side with the writings referred to in our former chapter the contrast is very marked. The phraseology, the point of view, the aim, the type of spiritual life represented are all different. The words and deeds of Jesus get but little attention and there is no

concern to show that he is the Christ. Emphasis has shifted from a past career and an expected second coming to a new interest. The main concern now is to interpret the faith in Jesus in such a way as to satisfy those religious and moral aspirations of the peoples of the Graeco-Roman world which had survived the terrifying collision of the ethnic faiths thrown confusedly together by the Roman conquests. The Pauline writings record the struggles of an acutely sensitive soul with these tremendous issues.

It is plain that, while Paul counted himself a Jew by spiritual inheritance, his spirit was in many respects much more akin to the Graeco-Roman. His attitude toward the Jewish scriptures is generally free. At times, it is true, he seems to take them to be literally the word of God but at other times, setting aside the "letter" in favor of the "spirit," he drives a critical wedge through the sacred writings. Again, when occasion demands it, literalism gives way to allegorism and symbolism. The explanation of the seeming self-contradictions of Paul is to be found, not in some rounded-out "plan of salvation," but in the longing of a spirit, renewed by contact with the divine, to communicate its secret to all men so as to unite all in one great communion. In a word, the Pauline writings are pervaded by the thrilling assurance that the divine personality who had flooded Paul's own soul with the power to conquer all evil was able as well to impart this power to the whole world of men. Paul was a statesman-evangelist. While the primitive Christian expectation of a sudden return of Christ to the earth finds, on the whole, a fading response in his soul, the prospect that really thrills him to ecstasy is the expectation that the whole

of mankind here and hereafter may be filled with the same purifying and quickening presence that pervaded his own spirit and made him over into a new man. Let us examine in outline the character of this wonderful man.

I. THE SECRET OF PAUL AS A PREACHER OF HUMAN BETTERMENT LAY IN HIS DEEP AND SYMPATHETIC INSIGHT INTO THE MASTER MOTIVE OF THE MORAL LIFE.

1. *Paul was not primarily a logical reasoner, philosopher or churchman, though all these traits are found in him, but he was an evangelist through and through.* Only by slighting this fact can any one make him out to have been throughout a Jewish eschatologist, a sort of theoretical jurist in questions of human government, or a speculative cosmologist. It would be much nearer the truth to say that he was all of these in part but none of them in particular. He engages in discursive reasoning at times but often, it would seem, according to the rules of logic, inconsistently. He discusses problems of jurisprudence but is without a juridical system. He thrusts out startling speculations about heaven and earth, time and eternity, but they are never wrought into a complete scheme of cosmic order. One might accept all of Paul's theories along these lines and yet remain a stranger to his life's motives. And one might reject them all in turn without losing the redemptive impulse of life he communicates. These forms of his thought are only the skeleton that conceals while it temporarily embodies the real man he was. In due time they all become antiquated and pass away.

The same thing can be as truly said with respect to his statements about modes of divine worship, organizations of believers, methods of propaganda or formal doctrines. Paul was, at heart, neither liturgist, ecclesiastic, nor catechist. He was at heart a moralist, in the best sense of that oft-misused word. With him the emphasis is laid constantly on the morally wholesome in all the relations of life, whether it be in the life of the individual or the life of the community. That all men ought to be under the control of the high purpose that had come into possession of his soul; that they ought to be pure, just, kind, patient, forgiving, self-sacrificing and unwearied in love and labor for others; that they ought all to cultivate those high virtues whose worth had been established in human experience the world over—in a word, that they ought to be men true and perfect in all their ways, men actually righteous (upright) in God's sight—to bring this to pass was Paul's supreme ambition. When he discourses, as he often does, on the subject of justification he is not thinking of a legal standing (even when he uses legal forms of speech), but of a right state of mind and heart and will. It was to bring this to pass that Christ, he believed, came to the world, died and rose to life immortal.

2. *Paul was in no sense a mere conventional moralist.* To him the moral life was a very different thing from the keeping of specific commands or obedience to positive laws. He never fails to penetrate to its inner character. This was always to be wrought out, as he had found by experience, through bitter conflict, inward struggle. The issue in the case of every man was either a triumph or a tragedy and the outcome was to continue through

eternity. The spectacle of the struggle captivates his imagination. In all moral conflicts the presence of supernatural potencies could be discerned. His was an emotional morality, clothed with beauty as well as filled with vigor. For, to him, morality and religion were at bottom one.

The clearness of perception, sternness of will and intensity of feeling with which Paul approached the issues of life are reflected in the severity of his judgment upon the heathen world. It was its deep-seated immorality that appalled him, that proved men to be reprobate of God and that made them, in the very processes of their nature, "children of wrath." The fierce ancient prophetic arraignment of the ways of both Jew and Gentile is revived in Paul. Yet his was no abusive or malignant spirit. In him there was united with sternness of denunciation a sympathy with the moral yearnings of men everywhere and a power to idealize the life to which he invited them, that must have been very winsome. The exhortations addressed to the communities of believers, for whose sakes he wrought so bravely, attest it. Many pages might be filled with quotations. Our space permits the use of only one or two:

[1]"Finally, brethren,
Whatsoever things are true,
Whatsoever things are honorable,
Whatsoever things are just,
Whatsoever things are pure,
Whatsoever things are lovely,
Whatsoever things are of good report,
If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,
Think on these things."

[1]Phil. 4:8

[1]"Let love be without hypocrisy.
Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.
In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another;
In honor preferring one another;
In diligence not slothful;
In spirit fervent;
Serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation;
Continuing steadfastly in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.
Bless them that persecute you; bless and curse not.
Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep."

With Paul these things are not merely the product of salvation, they *are* the Christian's salvation as a present, realized fact. He was no recluse who, wearied and disgusted with the world, retires to seclusion where he may indulge in the ecstasies of inward self-contemplation or in unsparing condemnation of the erring but struggling multitudes whom he has selfishly left behind. He was a man of the people and lived with them. He knew the life of his day. He had mingled freely with the mixed hordes of peoples that had floated into the great cities of the Empire and he witnessed the moral chaos which the obliteration of age-long customs and the extinction of the old-time deities had brought. It was the spiritual bewilderment and desolation of the times that continually stirred him to new endeavors in the vicarious life which was the great gift of Christ to men. While it is true that Paul's condemnation of the Gentile world is too sweeping, if meant to apply absolutely to every individual

[1]Rom. 12:9-15

in it, his utterances truly and fitly express the vehemence of a courageous soul that has devoted itself to the war against all wickedness, neither gives nor accepts quarter, and knows the futility of any but heroic measures. Moreover, his are not the words of a pessimist. Confident as he was that the condition of the world was bad, not less confident was he that he knew the remedy.

3. *The final clue to Paul's estimate of his times and to his hopes for the future lies in his profound personal experiences.* The source of his interpretation of life is not a Graeco-oriental philosophy but the Jewish religious faith. "To the Jew first and afterward to the Greek," expresses the order of his own spiritual life. It took its point of departure from within the Jewish communion and it bore to the end the stamp of the emphatic Jewish conviction of the supremacy of "righteousness." Under the influence of his Pharisaic training this became the governing principle of his life and he obeyed its imperious demands to the end. He became a Christian because he found in Jesus Christ what he had long sought in vain in Judaism—a righteousness of spirit and not merely of outer form, a righteousness that was an inner empowering and peace-giving principle and not conformity to an external but impotent command.

In the first place, his experience of this power was catastrophic. Luke's fine dramatization of it in the story of Paul's prostration on the way to Damascus is finely symbolic of that moral-religious change which Paul himself recounts in psychological terms and at times speaks of as a divine ecstasy. He felt that that inward revolution was an experience of "things which it is not lawful for a man to utter," but there comes repeatedly

to expression in his epistles a consciousness of the radical and permanent character of that sudden transformation which saved him from moral helplessness and despair. The breaking in upon his soul of the sense of the moral grandeur of the Crucified, in striking contrast to the censorious self-righteousness of the Pharisee who sought by conformity to an external "law" to fit himself for the test of the final judgment, led him to see that the true righteousness could be attained only through a repetition in his own soul of the self-crucifixion expressed in the cross of Jesus. As he now looked back upon those early days he perceived that, notwithstanding his zeal for the letter of the law, he had borne constantly in his heart an almost maddening sense of failure and heard in those days the low whisper of inner condemnation. He was inwardly divided. That early straining after righteousness was really a conflict between the lower and the higher principle in himself. He had failed in that struggle and was a beaten man. The law whose behest he had tried to obey, so far from coming to his mind as a vivifying and comforting message, had had precisely the opposite effect. Operating as an outward restraint on sin, it had really goaded him on to the slavery of continual sinning. In a rhetorical passage, personifying law and sin he says:[1] "I had not known sin except through the law . . . but sin, finding occasion, beguiled me through the commandment and through it slew me." His life, filled with inner contradiction, became an experience of moral impotence and death. The catastrophic end of the struggle is portrayed in the closing words of the soliloquy: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, I am delivered, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

[1] Rom. 7:7 ff

In the second place, sin and righteousness were to Paul directly antithetical. There could be no middle ground. The contrast between them was as between condemnation and acquittal, death and life. The issues of life being distinctly and absolutely moral, the breach with sin must always be correspondingly definite and thorough. Salvation meant this to him and, he felt, it must mean the same to all. It was moral deliverance.[1] "Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves servants to obedience his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness? But, being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." In all this Paul is the prototype of morally radical Christians everywhere and especially of Protestant Christians.

In the days of Paul, as at all times, this moral decisiveness made a powerful appeal to sincere people because it had in it the tone of certainty that earnest people long for in times of moral confusion or discouragement. In the great Graeco-Roman world to which Paul consecrated his life there were many who sought to fulfil the moral imperative—there are always many—but lacked both the power to do it and the assurance that it could be done. Paul's confidence that, through faith in the Crucified men come into possession of the secret of the righteous life, came to many as a mighty inspiration to live that life. They felt that they, too, might become the subjects of the working of a renewing and a purifying divine spirit.

4. This love of righteousness and the assurance that in and through Christ men attain to it is, I repeat, fundamental to Paulinism. Everything else in Paul's teaching is tributary to it. Let his speculations range as widely as

[1] Rom. 6:16, 17

they may, in the end he always returns to this theme: the purpose for which Jesus Christ came into the world was that men should be righteous with a righteousness divine. He is [1]"not ashamed of the Gospel . . . for therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith to faith." If he treats of a question of casuistry, such as the propriety of a Christian eating meat that had been offered to an idol, he does not fail to remind his readers that [2]"the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking"—not a matter, that is, of external rules—"but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Spirit." The mutual relations of members of the Christian communion are to be governed by the same principle: [3]"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?" The new man that Christ brought into the world is a man whom God has [4]"created in righteousness and holiness of truth." His own personal aim is, [5]"that I may gain Christ and be found in him . . . having . . . the righteousness which is from God by faith." Quotations to the same effect might be multiplied indefinitely. Be it noted that this "righteousness" signifies no mere legal standing or formal relation—that would be going back to Pharisaism—but such an inward controlling power to do good as he had experienced, an actual rightness of life within and without. Paul knew nothing of the fancied distinction between a man's "standing" with God and his "state." Paulinism stands not for a system of doctrine but for a type of life.

[1]Rom. 1:16 [2]Rom. 13:17 [3]1 Cor. 6:9
[4]Eph. 4:26 [5]Phil. 3:9

II. PAULINISM TRACES THE EXPERIENCE OF MORAL RENEWAL TO AN ACT OF IMMEDIATE SELF-REVELATION OF THE CRUCIFIED DIVINE CHRIST TO THE SOUL OF MAN.

Paul's experience seemed to him typical. The change in his life was grounded in the ineffable experience spoken of. It had a mystical aspect that appealed to the spirit of introspection common among orientals. How precisely it was that the crucifixion of Jesus could bring about the great moral revolution he had experienced he never quite succeeds in telling. He is never weary of speaking of "the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me," or of saying that a self-crucifixion came with the discovery that the Crucified was the Son of God. Yet his own experience he regarded as such that all men might share it if they would. All who had made Christ's self-commitment their own, had "crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." Through this new idealism the whole world had already to his view passed through the expected cataclysm[1] and had taken on a new character. It is to this ineffable experience that Paul refers when he says that men are saved by faith.

Paul's inability to furnish a clearly intelligible explanation of the manner in which the Crucified made a new man of him was no impediment to the propagation of his experience in other people, but quite the reverse. Since all the great inspirations that come to us in moments of great heart-searching or of most intimate fellowship with other men, have in them something that defies analysis, it cannot seem very strange that the moral revolution through which we seem to be conscious of the presence of God should also defeat the effort of intelligence to trace

[1] 2 Cor. 5:17

the lightning-like rapidity of its movement. One's certainty of the transformation of his character is not diminished by any such failure of intellect to make it plain to the thought of another. Indeed, both its value and its appealing quality are thereby enhanced. It is when "deep calleth unto deep" that our words produce the most telling effect.

But at the same time, Paul, counting himself a true Jew, "according to the spirit," and holding to the reality of a divine revelation in the Jewish scriptures, endeavors to interpret the higher Christian meaning into these scriptures and thereby to justify his estimate of those experiences to the minds of those who revered the scriptures as God's word. In a highly rhetorical passage in Galatians[1] he represents Christ as bearing the deuteronomic curse pronounced upon "every one that hangeth on a tree." How repugnant to the Jew the declaration that a criminal executed by the Roman rulers at the bidding of his own countrymen was the promised Messiah! With Paul the horror of the spectacle had been turned into exulting adoration as he read its meaning. For the voluntarily endured cross brought deliverance to those who deserved the curse. The revelation of the holy and infinite love of Jesus smote his heart into contrition as he perceived the satanic madness of his early hatred and persecution of Christians. There was flashed into his mind a new ideal and a new inspiration. In Jesus' act of supreme vicariousness he and all others might share. In such a self-devotion was revealed the way of sonship with God. In this and this alone the longed-for righteousness of God in men the world over is laid hold on.

[1]Gal. 3:13

The epistle to the Romans presents in greater detail a message which is the same in substance. Unfortunately, Protestant orthodox theologians have commonly treated the first four chapters of this great epistle as containing the substance of the whole work and not, which they ought to have done, as purely preparatory to a statement of the content of Paul's personal religious experience. Consequently, Paul's free, emotional utterances have been turned into a formal legal doctrine of salvation—the very same sort of thing as the Pharisees had done with the Jewish scriptures. The doctrine is about as follows: All men, without exception, are sinful by inherited nature and by deed. Being guilty before the bar of God, they are doomed to eternal punishment, unless a substitute can be found. Christ, the Son of God, is that divinely appointed substitute. The guilt, by divine prerogative, being legally imputed to him, he endured in his own divine-human person the punishment due. Hence it is possible for God justly to regard those for whom Christ died as having satisfied the demands of his law. Upon their personal exercise of faith in this atonement they are duly counted righteous.

The foregoing is in substance the theory of the basis of salvation ascribed to Paul by Calvinism. It seems to overlook the fact that the early portion of the epistle to the Romans constitutes Paul's apologetic addressed to the mind of people who had been trained, as he had been, in Jewish legalism. His method of argument is suited to that cast of thought. A distinction must always be made between one's faith and his theoretical justification of it. The faith may survive the collapse of its defense. The rabbinical training that served Paul so well in argument

with Jews would be quite helpless in the presence of the Greek mind and might easily conceal his true inner character from his hearer. Paul's inherited legalism was alien to the spiritually-minded Greek and, as well, to the genius of his own faith.

The soul of Paulinism is found in Paul's experience of a moral transformation in himself. This inner revolution he traced to an intuition (vision, revelation) of the meaning of the crucifixion of Jesus whom the Christians called the Christ. It was a light from heaven that, he felt, flashed into his soul when he saw the Son of God in that sufferer. The pain and the shame of that death, the tragedy of it all, revealed the moral grandeur of the Crucified. The death of Jesus marked the culmination and perfection of his self-devotion to God's will to save the world. The "judgment" and the "curse" that fell upon Jesus reflected the judgment and the curse under which Paul himself and every other man was suffering. It all served to disclose to his awakened conscience the selfishness, the failure, the moral impotence, the unworthiness of the whole of his past career. The sentence of death that fell upon Jesus was a divine pronouncement of death upon the life which Paul had lived hitherto. He had died with Christ. The resurrection of the Christ was Paul's own rising to a new life. The "Son of God was revealed" in Paul. One might say that Paul objectifies his own experience when he interprets into Christ's sublime act of self-devotion the spiritual process that went on in Paul's soul. And we might as truly say that he appropriates to his own subjective experience the experience which he believed was the lot of Jesus Christ. For him they were one and the same event. He was one with Christ in it all. Christ's

deed, in all the power and worth of it, was mystically Paul's own. Henceforth there was nothing in moral achievement impossible to him. He was dead to the old life and alive to the new.

Right here is found the great secret of the power of the Pauline message to the Graeco-oriental religious mind. Naturally, in the epistle known as, "to the Romans," he undertakes to interpret the Jewish picture of a Messiah who died, was buried, and rose up from the grave to the sky in the terms of an inner moral cataclysm and recreation of humanity. He would universalize his own experience. Adopting the Greek antithesis of "flesh" and "spirit" he sees, on the one hand, the principle of evil at work in his own "members" bringing forth "fruit unto death," and the "spirit" (which he calls the "spirit of God," "spirit of Christ," "Christ," or just "the spirit") bringing forth the "fruits of righteousness," or "life eternal."

It seems to me utterly impossible for any one to reduce all Paul's statements on this subject to a logically consistent system of doctrine. His mind was not of the kind that could submit itself to an order of that kind. But it is quite plain that for him the Jewish externalistic, juridical view of salvation has given place to a view of salvation that makes it a vital, moral process. The self-giving of Christ on the cross becomes his self-giving to the believer in all the power of his divine vicariousness. And faith is no mere believing of information and no mere "means" of salvation. It *is* salvation, since it is the act of personal union with Christ in purpose and career. We have no space for a detailed treatment of Paul's utterances on this subject but must leave that to the reader.

III. THE PAULINE GOSPEL GAINED ACCESS TO THE GREEK MIND LARGELY BY ITS APPEAL TO THE SPIRITUAL YEARNINGS WHICH HAD BEEN FOSTERED BY THE GRAECO-ORIENTAL CULTURE AND HAD SURVIVED THE ROMAN CONQUEST. THE CHRISTIAN JEW HERE FOUND GROUND COMMON TO HIMSELF AND THE PIOUS GREEK.

In his many journeys Paul's course of travel gravitated toward the religious groups that were to be found in the great commercial centers of his time. He found open to him an inner affiliation with these people. His announcement of the faith in Christ was often accompanied with polemical deliverances, as he confronted the various religious philosophies current among them. But if that very polemic was to be effective in a constructive way it must be clothed in the terms of the higher qualities of the spiritual life already cultivated among these religious groups. The situation could be boldly met by recognizing the worthful features of their life and seeking to transform these into a distinctly Christian faith. If, as Paul claimed, God was God of the Gentile as well as of the Jew, why should not the utterance of the religious life of the heathen become as fitting a vesture of the Christian faith as was that which came from the Jew? Paul, with his human sympathy, spirituality and moral certitude instinctively sought this natural way of approach to the ethnic religious spirit. The epistles to the Corinthian, Colossian and Ephesian Christians indicate the manner in which this was done.

In the many ancient secret cults, known to us commonly as "mystery religions," there were observed rites and

ceremonies that were supposed to impart to the initiates a mystical enlightenment that lifted them above the common, secular, physical plane of existence into a communion with deity beyond the power of language to describe or of thought to conceive. Paul evidently had contacts with these views and practices and, with the keen insight of the genuine evangelist, aimed at assuring people of this type that what they sought for but could not find was now offered to them, not in pantomime but in reality. The true God now invited them to enter into communion with himself in the Spirit. In place of the "wisdom," or philosophy, "that knew not God," he presents the true "wisdom from God." This[1] "mystery" was now revealed in Christ to all who would receive it—Christ, no longer known according to the flesh, no mere fact of past history, but a divine Spirit working redemptively in the hearts of men and, indeed, in the whole universe. The time had now come "to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God," "the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," the purpose that the "breadth and length and height and depth of the love of God" might come to all mankind through the dwelling of Christ in their hearts. Thereby men may become "filled into all the fullness of God."

The mystery religions presented dramatic representations of a divinity undergoing death and rising again with more potent life, as nature dies with the approach of winter and revives in the spring. These mere images of reality were now bound to disappear, by the coming of the Son of God from the heavens to suffer a real death and to rise again to life immortal, that is, the life now

[1] Eph. 3:4 ff

offered to all who would join themselves to him.[1] "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and in him ye are made full." Here is the true enlightenment and the true redemption. God has[2] "delivered us out of the power of the darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love."

In the hands of Paul the traditional gospel was in principle transmuted into a new form. The popular narratives of past fact and the pictorial sketches of future fact, so characteristic of the preaching of early Jewish converts, give place to the conception of a divine principle working savingly in the inner life of men. Herein lies the secret of the spiritual power of ancient Catholicism.

But at the same time the door was open to a progressive paganization of the Christian faith. The ancient ablutions, sacred feasts and incantations through which it was supposed that the "energy" of a divinity worked in men and made them one with himself, divine, immortal, reappear in modified form and with modified meaning in the baptism, the eucharist and other ritual forms of the Catholic Church. The renewing of men in the image of God was metaphysical rather than moral in its aim, and the methods used are magical rather than intelligible.

When Paul goes still further and suggests a cosmic philosophy that makes of salvation itself a cosmic process; when he pictures Christ as victor in a conflict[3] with the "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers" that dwelt in the higher regions and seek to accomplish our defeat and ruin, his rhetorical utterances were susceptible of a literal interpretation. The doctrine of salvation would then be turned into a theory of cosmic redemption.

[1]Col. 2:9 [2]Col. 1:13 [3]See Col. and Eph.

If it were carried still further into the realm of mystery it would leave the human personality the helpless subject of forces in the realm of the supernatural—the very thing that happened in Catholicism.

Comment: It seems a far cry indeed from the simple Jewish expectation of Messiah's return from the skies to judge the world and save his people to this hope of a transmutation of the universe. But Paul seems to have felt no violent break in the trend of his mind as he passed from the one to the other. The explanation lies in the fact that his ultimate interest lay neither in the one nor the other but in the personality of Jesus Christ, of whose worth either might become on occasion a suitable picture. In that divine personality lay the power to work the inner, moral renovation of humanity. Theories as such had but little hold on him. Paul's various dramatic representations of the career and significance of Jesus were all tributary to his presentation of the sublime self-devotion by which Jesus of Nazareth inaugurated a progressive moral renewal of humanity. This is the essence of his message to the Greek.

A SECOND STAGE

THE JOHANNINE INTERPRETATION

As the years passed and Jesus came not from the skies nor gave the looked-for signs of his coming to avenge and save his people, there was danger lest the early faith pass into the frenzy of fanaticism or the gloom of despair. In none of the New Testament books is the struggle with such a spirit of pessimism more vividly reflected than in the series of visions known as the Apocalypse of John.

Whether the author be the same person as the John of the Gospel matters little to us here. If the Apocalypse be interpretable as a sort of drama or allegory, it may be so. The Pauline message had already set aside in principle, if not always explicitly, the hope in a coming cosmic catastrophe. In the Gospel and the first epistle of John the Pauline view is developed in a definite direction. The aim is to turn the thoughts of Christians away from the futile waiting for outer events, that were never to happen, to the present all-satisfying sense of an abiding presence in the heart and a holy fellowship with God that outward conditions could never destroy. Doubtless, in the Johannine view itself lurked a subtle danger, the danger of turning the actual personal human career of Jesus into a theophany. This came at a later time. But, for John, the earthly life was real and he bases his view of salvation on it.

1. While the Gospel of John opens with a kind of philosophic poem that recalls the poem of creation in the book of Genesis, *the writer's real interest is linked neither with the beginning nor with the end of the world as such but with the character of the spiritual forces at work in the hearts of the men who live in it.* One might almost say that his Gospel is itself a sustained poem. For the events in Jesus' career which it portrays have interest for him only as they appear symbolical of the life of the spirit and eternal truth. They are "signs" that "manifested forth his glory,"—that divine quality which is yet to be disclosed to his disciples in its fullness and to be fully shared by them when they shall "see him as he is." The Gospel and the Epistle read almost like a commentary on the great saying of Paul: "The Lord is the Spirit. . . . We

all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit." For both writers this is the final salvation.

The essential content of John's message may be expressed formally in the following propositions: The world of men lies in moral darkness. Salvation can come only by the revelation of the true God. Since he is Spirit, the revelation must be within men and cannot be truly understood as outward. This revelation of the true God is in his Son, Jesus Christ, the pre-existent, who came to men in a personal human life. By the communication to believers of the spirit that was in him he makes them possessors of this revelation. They are inwardly and eternally one with the Son of God and stand with him over against the unbelieving world, which is condemned eternally to death.

2. *The Johannine message is addressed to the religiously-minded Greek.* The beautiful recital of some events already narrated in the earlier Gospels, along with the new scenes described, aims throughout at convincing his readers that Jesus had lived on the earth as a divine person who redeems men from sin by bringing them into oneness of thought, feeling and will with himself and, therefore, with God, who is called Father. This was the answer to the longing of the Greek for an assurance of participation in the divine nature.

Jesus' manifestation of the true Light does not cease with his death. Death was only his way of departure to the invisible realm from which he came. But this very departure is the way by which he came into the hearts of men more fully than was possible while he was visible.

He comes again, it is true, and he has come again already —"now are we Sons of God"—as the enlightening, purifying, immortalizing spirit within them. Thus both the Jewish way of conceiving the relation of Jesus to God and men and the Greek way of conceiving the relation of the human to the divine coalesce and, in the Johannine message, are transmuted into a higher moral significance. The way was opened for men who were Greeks by spiritual breeding and alien to the Jewish mind to abandon the latter and retain only the former without ceasing to be Christian. We shall see this come to pass later.

3. *The Johannine interpretation acknowledges no fixed outer forms of faith.* God dwells in men's minds, not in these forms. Worship is not associated with places but with the Spirit. Jesus baptizes men in the Spirit. At death he departs to the dwelling-place of God, that is, in the inner life of men. Physical and racial relations give place to the spiritual. Over against communities of the flesh stands the community of believers, the true flock of God.

Naturally, no interest is taken, so far, that is, as actual statements go, in the genealogy of Jesus or the manner of his birth. His true being is always from heaven and his knowledge and works proceed from that source. The significance of his healings and other wonders lies in the signs they give of his unity with God. With the reaction against the hope of a physical return and its attendant material gains, comes the affirmation that the final judgment takes place here and now. Instead of a distant resurrection at the last day—a remote consolation for a mourner—there comes from Jesus the sweeping assurance:[1] "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believ-

[1] John 11:25, 26

eth in me though he die, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Instead of the final discourses on a mountain, in the earlier Gospels, foretelling the destruction of the present order of the universe, there occurs in John's story a series of conversations in a private room with heart-searchings and questionings on the part of the disciples and the answering assurance on Jesus' part that the bond between him and them was as inviolable as the bond of union between him and the Father. For the two were of the same nature.

4. *In the Johannine message there is steady reliance on a knowledge that is super-rational.* But it comes to men, not by means of incantations or mysteries or ecstasies, but rather through faith, an enlightened trust in a supreme divine personality revealed in time. This is more than a *means* to life. It *is* life. This higher knowledge is more than an *intellectual* act. It is a *moral* act. Darkness is more than intellectual dullness, it is perverseness and depravity. Light is inseparable from love and darkness from hate. Truth is right direction of the will as well as freedom from ignorance and deception. The life that came to men in Jesus is no mere continuance eternally in a divine substance or nature (cf. the Greek). It is the right adjustment of the whole inner being of the man to the will of God.

Yet, it must be added, one does not find in John the broad Pauline interest in and sympathy with the practical difficulties that confront men in their secular callings, nor has he Paul's optimism as to the future remoulding of all these, so that the will of God is fulfilled in them also. Though he affirms most beautifully and impressively that God loved the whole world, he does not seem to

have looked for any such world-conquest, by the new faith, as Paul hoped for. John's message is a gospel of salvation *from* the world, rather than *of* the world. It is enjoyed only within the beloved community of believers. If, then, it is to be said that the Johannine message interiorized and universalized the Gospel by its appeal to the deep spiritual longings of mankind, it must also be said that this message unintentionally prepared the way for the sacramentalism that is of the essence of Catholicism.

The present chapter may well conclude with a few words as to the interpretation of the Christian salvation offered in the epistle to the Hebrews. To say, as has often been said, that its aim is to show that human salvation was procured once for all by the bloody sacrifice of Christ at a definite time and presented by him to God in Heaven as the basis of our forgiveness, is misleading. It mistakes the drapery of the teaching for its real body. The author is concerned with the prophetical activity of Christ rather than his priestly mediation. The value of the priestly system of the past lies in its truly prophetic character. By means of the allegorical method of interpretation the whole priestly system of the Jews is made tributary to the revelation that is final and complete in Christ. If Jesus is the great High Priest, it is not because he offered a sacrifice to God in the sense in which sacrifices for propitiation were offered of old, not because he endured the penalty of human sinning when he died, but because in his whole career, culminating in his death, he has mediated the true knowledge of God to men. He is the "word of God, living and active" in men. Men are saved by divine illumination, by inward revelation.

When the author says that men are saved by faith he refers to their conscious possession of truth and to that power to overcome opposition and danger of all kinds, which is the reward of reaching forward to spiritual realities not yet present. Faith is vastly more than a receptive attitude, more than a personal confiding and trust. It is an organ for the apprehension of that for which the world was made, for beholding in anticipation the eternal "city, whose builder and maker is God." Faith in Jesus is confidence in the way of life of One who passed through all the stages of human striving and suffering and reached divine perfection in actual experience.

The writer was one of those great leaders of Christian thought who sought to mediate between the early Christian traditions and their use of the Jewish scriptures, on the one hand, and the Neoplatonic philosophy of religion, on the other. That philosophy was the consolation of many people who had lost confidence in the old crude faiths and sought refuge in a philosophy which told how through enlightenment, by a redemptive process, a fallen world might return to the divine source from which it came at the first. We place the writer of Hebrews by the side of John. Both sought to enhance the primitive Christian faith by developing it into a philosophy of salvation, the way to the perfect life of light and love. The idea of deliverance from the power of demons and the horrors of an approaching cosmic tragedy is giving place to the assurance of inward illumination that makes one a possessor of the invisible and eternal as a present reality. Jesus is becoming not so much a memory as a personal potency imparted to the spirits of men. We shall see this naturalized and institutionalized in Catholicism.

Comment: When the Christian Gospel was carried out into the non-Jewish world a two-fold change came over the minds of its bearers. In the first place, they found themselves confronted with the social, economic and political conditions of that larger world. They were compelled to place themselves in a positive, constructive relation to the ways and institutions of that world. The new Christian communities that arose had no regular connection with the temple at Jerusalem or the Jewish synagogue in any place. They were not of the Jewish order. Their natural affiliations were with the institutions of the people from whom their members were drawn. Under the initiative and guidance of such men of prophetic spirit and statesmanlike genius as the apostle Paul the way was opened for the Christianizing of the institutions of the Roman Empire, as Sir William M. Ramsay has pointed out, in his "St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen." The distinct implication was that institutions of non-Jewish peoples could be regarded as having a divine origin and as being truly preparatory to the spread of the Christian faith. The natural outcome appeared in due time. Christian institutions took an active part in shaping the whole order of life of the nations in whose midst they were planted.

In the second place, there sprang up in the minds of Christians a new interpretation of their faith. With the Jewish scriptures in their hands, they continued to express it in terms that accorded with the Jewish modes of religious utterance. But this was a somewhat artificial practice for men whose traditional modes of thought were of another mould. The Grecian-taught man brought with him into the new communion conceptions inherited from

his former life-relations. If he was to be addressed intelligently he must be appealed to through these. When the Gospel was being uttered far and wide in the Grecian tongue Grecian conceptions were added to the traditional Jewish ways of thinking and began in many places to displace them. The inevitable corollary—though for a long time it might not be explicit in the Christian mind—was the admission and affirmation of a divine preparation of the Greek mind for the new faith. There was a feeling of inner affinity between the Christian faith, on the one hand, and Grecian religion, science and philosophy, on the other hand, and that too without necessary detriment to the new faith. In fact, it might prove an enhancement.

In such a marriage of the faith to ethnic types of spirituality there was, of course, the grave danger of a paganization of Christianity. That this occurred gradually and on a vast scale has been pointed out by Adolf Harnack in his great work, History of Dogma. But what he has not said, though he might have done so with equal justice—the meaning of our Christian faith has received thereby a vast enrichment and a pathway was made for its conquest of humanity. The men whose works have been briefly characterized in this chapter were the great pioneers in the winning of this richer interpretation of the Christian salvation. And so must it ever be.

CHAPTER IV

CATHOLIC SACRAMENTALISM

A hundred and fifty years after the birth of Christ the Christian body was made up almost entirely of Gentiles. A hundred and fifty years later the outstanding Christian fact is the organized Catholic Church. In these three hundred years multitudes of little Christian communities (churches) had sprung up, each of them a local center of influences making for the remoulding of the life of the peoples of the Roman Empire and regions beyond. Fierce opposition from other faiths, public opprobrium showered upon them, physical violence encouraged by suspicious officials, and the severe and prolonged persecutions at the hands of political authorities had failed to shake their confidence or dampen their evangelistic zeal. Conflict served only to strengthen them by raising up leaders of genius and courage under whose generalship was developed an organization that might well be regarded as a rival to the imperial system itself. The bishops (overseers) of the churches steadily worked toward the union of the many churches in the bonds of a common faith, a mutual sympathy and support in times of trial, and a system of communication that enabled them to keep in touch with all the churches. By thus welding together the many churches in one Catholic (universal) Church the danger of destruction at the hands of foes from without was surmounted. No physical force, no political power could annihilate the faith.

But there remained the danger of destruction from within. There was the menace of a spiritual disunity. Peoples of many races, nations and languages, representing many varieties of tradition, culture and customs mingled as votaries of the new faith. Many variant interpretations of the faith naturally appeared. Controversy and inner strife portended disintegration and weakness. There was need, it seemed, of some authoritative declaration that might stand as a basis of common belief and action. This might involve the exclusion of dissidents but that seemed not too high a price to pay for union and safety.

The movement was hastened through the accession to the throne of the Caesars of Constantine, son of a Christian mother and friend to the new faith. Constantine's interests were doubtless mainly political. If he could make the bishops faithful subjects of the Empire and the whole Church a constituent part of the instrument of government, it would facilitate the union of the vast Roman territories in one mighty system under his own imperial control. The bishops could not fail to see that new possibilities of power were thereby thrown open to the Church. Might she not also become imperial in her sway? When, in response to his summons, they met in Council at Nicaea in A.D. 325, the statement of their creed bore an ecclesiastico-political as well as a religio-philosophical character. The conception of the nature and the means of salvation that has held ever since the dominant place in the Catholic system was mainly shaped by those two influences. The former became dominant in Western Catholicism and the latter in Eastern Catholicism.

Not long after Constantine's reign the Empire became dual, a Western Empire with Rome as its capital and an Eastern Empire with its capital at the new city of Constantine, Constantinople. Correspondingly, the one Catholic Church became virtually two churches, both claiming to be Catholic, but with significant differences. Both might formally acknowledge the one creed but their interpretations of it would differ according to the genius of each church. The genius of the Greek is found in his gift of philosophic speculation, that of the Roman in his practical sense, his capacity for government. The Greek interpretation of the creed turns one's mind to questions concerning the *ultimate nature* of things; the Roman, to questions concerning the *established order*. If the Roman repeated the words of a creed identical with the creed of the Greek, nevertheless, he probably failed to enter deeply into the Greek's thought just as the Roman philosopher borrowed his ideas from the Greeks but never understood the soul of Greek philosophy. But he knew better how to use the creed as an instrument for securing order and safety. The Greek was more closely in sympathy with the speculative, meditative mind of the East, while the Roman was more in sympathy with the restless, self-assertive, hard-to-manage mind of the West. Their respective conceptions of human salvation we shall find to differ correspondingly.

I. THE EASTERN (GREEK) CATHOLIC WAY OF SALVATION

In the religious faiths of the East the mystical element was in control. It retained its high place in the life of the Eastern Catholic Church. The Roman military and political conquest might be expected to carry with it the

conquest of the deities and the extinction of the faiths of the conquered. But their destruction was far from complete. They survived, as we have seen, in the mystery religions. Indeed, it was a feature of the shrewd Roman policy to leave intact the ethnic social customs, religious traditions and rituals so long as they did not collide with Roman authority. They even went so far as to grant official recognition to certain deities and to the observation of some of the mysteries that concerned the upper classes of society, the Eleusinian, the Orphic and the Dionysian mysteries. The religions of the masses of the people in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Egypt survived the conquest but, having no legal standing, their rites could continue to be observed only in secret. Now the vast majority of Christian converts were from the masses of the common people. The Christian religion, being itself under the legal ban (*religio illicita*), met a sympathetic hearing from the first from many votaries of the "private" religions. It was but natural, therefore, that there should be an infiltration into the Christian religion of the ideas, motives and hopes of these traditional religions and that the symbols or cryptic utterances in which the meaning and power of these faiths were customarily supposed to be conveyed to the initiates while concealed from others, should pass over into the Christian faith, though with some change. There was a widespread revival of religion generally in the time of Christ. The ancient Catholic faith grew up in this atmosphere and absorbed it in part. If, then, there was a Christianizing of paganism there was also in process a corresponding paganization of Christianity.

The mystery cults were connected with stories of divinities, which were at the same time nature-myths. Processes of nature were identified with the activities or sufferings of the divinities. The great theme was death and restoration to life. The picturesque phenomena of winter and spring furnished the prevailing coloring. The death of vegetation in winter and its reappearing alive in the spring signalized the death and resuscitation of divinity. If men could be in some way united with this divinity might they not share in the risen life? It is noteworthy that the feasts that celebrated the rising of divinities from the dead were kept in the springtime. These myths, taken at their best and apart from coarse or immoral tales that sometimes constituted a feature of them, portray the deep longings of all men for redemption from the death that is inevitable for all. In the pain and wretchedness of conquered peoples there lay a powerful incentive to turn to the promise of sharing in the immortality of a risen divinity. To such people salvation must be a redemption, redemption from death and from all the powers that bring it upon us.

The Christian announcement of the resurrection of Jesus made a powerful appeal to the religiosity of the East. The certified fact of his death and resurrection, joined to the calm confidence with which Christians faced death, their purity and nobility of life, their tender interest in the condition of the suffering and the erring, their firm allegiance to Jesus, and their loyalty to one another, brought to inquiring souls assurance that the desire for a mystical union with deity was at last truly to be satisfied.

The outward means of effecting this transformation of human nature into the likeness of the divine were at hand. Candidates for initiation into the ancient mysteries were subjected to certain ceremonies, such as, fasting and other preparatory ascetical practices, a sojourn in the darkness of some secret cave, a pantomime of death and resurrection, baptism in water or (as in Mithraism) in blood, a sacred meal, repetition of incantations, laying on of hands, and finally the sealing of the initiate with the name of the divinity. In his excitement he might be carried into a frenzy or ecstasy accompanied with visions of future bliss. He was supposed to have been united by this ritual to the divinity so as to be raised at last to the heavenly realm and made immortal. With this transmutation of nature came also the impartation, supposedly, of a secret knowledge or inspiration. Thus were men saved from darkness, corruption and death. If we remember that the Christian Gospel was mainly propagated in those early days of its history by the spontaneous zeal of ordinary people, that the common highways, the well-sides, and the bazaars were the places of easiest contact, and that the ideas that were transmitted from man to man were unordered, informal and free, we can easily see that it was inevitable that the Christian narratives should be metamorphosed into the story of the coming of a divinity in human flesh to save men from their undivine, darkened, erring, corrupt, mortal nature and that the Christian liturgical practices should be viewed as the means of accomplishing in those who received them the longed for change. Thus far of the multitudes of untaught converts.

What of the educated and intelligent? With them a sympathetic understanding of the religious cravings of the masses was united with a philosophy that was akin to these in spirit. This philosophy was a cosmology, a theory of knowledge, an ethic and a soteriology in one. The whole of existence as at present constituted was held to be composed of two opposed constituents, matter and spirit. The world in its present order was evil, since spirit, the higher substance, had been mixed with and subjected to matter, the lower substance, through the action of semi-personal evil powers. Light or true knowledge, which pertains to spirit alone, was thereby shrouded in darkness; ignorance, error, evil-doing and death were the outcome. The only way of escape lay in a great reversal. Spirit must be redeemed from its bondage to matter, the light of heaven must dispel the darkness, good take the place of evil, and life the place of death. The only way in which this could come about was by the incoming of a higher divinity who would expel the lower and evil divinities, release our spirits from their bondage, impart his own nature to us, and thereby bring to us light, knowledge, goodness and life immortal. Salvation would thus be a process of cosmic redemption.

In this theory the personal and the non-personal, the moral and the non-moral were confused. Sin or evil was not so much guilt as it was misfortune, darkness, error, unhappiness. The Gospel was not so much a clearly apprehensible message addressed to the intelligence as it was rather an allegory. Baptism and the Supper were not so much forms of confession and self-commitment as they were magical acts having a secret, divine, incomprehensible efficacy in them. These, rather than a ra-

tional statement of truth, became the means of salvation. They became holy mysteries to be celebrated with the pronouncement of the name of Jesus Christ, the Divine One, who had come to redeem.

We perceive why it was that controversies arose concerning the nature of Jesus. Since the Christian mysteries were celebrated with the pronunciation of his name and the Christian hope of salvation lay in union with him, the issue at stake was, whether there was a real communication of deity to the recipients of these Christian "mysteries." Were they truly united to deity in the Baptism? Did they truly partake of him in the Supper?

We find here the explanation of the importance attached to the question respecting the right to administer the true mysteries (Latin—sacraments) in the controversies that took place between different ecclesiastical bodies. For, as was supposed, that body which possessed the true sacraments must be solely competent to minister salvation. Herein also lies the explanation of the fact that the great controversies among Christians in those times turned on the question of the essential deity of Jesus Christ. In the face of a confusing polytheism Christians emphasized the doctrine of monotheism above all else. In the impartation of the nature of deity alone could real redemption be found. But, from the very first, Christians had also preached salvation through Jesus Christ alone, the Son of God. If he be truly Saviour, his nature must be identical with the nature of the one only true God. Otherwise the salvation that he brought could not be perfect, another must be called upon to complete the work of redemption. All other so-called divinities must be only demons, able to impart only a demonic

nature to men. Christ came to drive out the demons and save men from those evil powers whose fruit was death. At his reascension to heaven he had intrusted to his Church, his body on earth, the right and the power to minister his divine nature in the "Christian" mysteries. The all-important practical question was, how to discover this true Church and receive salvation at her hands.

The "notes," or marks, of the true Church were affirmed to be holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. She possessed holiness, that is, she had charge of the holy mysteries that separated the subjects to whom they were ministered from the evil world to which all pertained by nature. She possessed catholicity, that is, the whole of the enlightened and purified among men were to be found in this church and none elsewhere. She possessed apostolicity, that is, the authority of the original apostles, given to them by Christ, was exercised solely by her. An evidence of this is seen in her preservation of the true apostolic doctrine. Consequently, we find the Catholic theologians at Nicaea in A.D. 325, at Constantinople in A.D. 380, and at Chalcedon in A.D. 451, reaffirming the statements of the so-called Apostles' Creed with significant enlargement, particularly of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and of the Church. He is the "only begotten of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; of the same essence (or substance) with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." This is followed by the significant statement, "And (I believe) one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church," and

this, again, by the statement, "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." The symbol of Chalcedon carefully develops the doctrine of the "two natures" of Christ, these being "inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably" united, "the property of each nature being preserved and concurring in one Person and one hypostasis (substance), not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is not to be supposed that the people to whom or by whom these words might be repeated could put a clear meaning into them. It was not necessary that they should do so. It was only necessary that they recognize that the only way of salvation was through the church's mysteries, beginning with Baptism. The basis of all these mysteries was the supreme mystery of Christ who united, in a way beyond our comprehension, perfect deity and perfect humanity in himself. He who submitted to the church's mysteries partook of the grace of Christ. The perfect humanity of Christ was progressively imparted to him. He was inwardly enlightened, purified, and made immortal. This the holy church could certify. Accordingly, the scriptures also were held to be a mystery whose inward meaning was preserved immaculate in the Church. All the mysteries it was her prerogative alone to minister. Baptism enlightens and cleanses from sin. The Eucharist imparts to the baptized the real flesh and blood, the pure human nature of Christ. Other mysteries were added authoritatively, as need demanded. The recipients were united to God in the mysterious Christ. They were progressively made incorruptible and at last, if they remained within the church, were made immortal. The

striking words of Clement of Alexandria,[1] uttered long before the creed was completed, are significant of what was coming: "Being baptised, we are illuminated; being illuminated, we become sons; we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal."

This ancient Catholic doctrine of salvation seemed suited to the high mystical spirit that sought for the ecstasy or rapture that lifted man out of his limitations and made him one with the Infinite. At the same time it seemed to stoop to the level of the ignorant and secured to him the same blessing, though admittedly only by degrees, through mystic rites which he was required obediently to receive. The dogmas of the creed which one was required to accept were produced by a philosophy of religion that aimed at the vindication of the Christian "mysteries." *The ritual is the practical basis of the creed.*

The ancient Catholic church system is a monument of a progressive paganization of the Christian faith. But, on the other hand, the preservation of the Gospels and the other writings in a New Testament that was equalized in worth with the Old; the supreme place professedly given to Christ and thereby the possibility that his personality might still stand in its true dignity and worth, notwithstanding its obscuration through the orthodox interpretation of him; the thought of an inward enlightening and purifying spirit; the reiteration of human freedom, and the necessity of practising morality as a condition of receiving the benefits of the mysteries, doubtless operated in the creation of a character truly Christian in multitudes of people. The Catholic Church with its ritual and its creed tended to paganize Christianity. But men are often superior to their churches and their creeds.

[1] Paedagogus 1.6

II. THE MEDIAEVAL (ROMAN) CATHOLIC SYSTEM

The task of the Western church had to do, not with peoples who were worn down and wearied to death with a defunct civilization, on the one hand, and by political and economic oppression, on the other hand, but with the restless, daring, roving, battle-loving tribes of western Europe—Goths and Germans, Franks and Spaniards, Swedes and Norwegians, Danes and Anglo-Saxons, Scots and Welsh and Irish. They were not seeking a happy release from the burdens and miseries of the present life and an entrance into a placid immortality through the transmutation of human nature into the divine. For them life was full of zest and if they were to be saved from wrecking and ruining it by their imperious self-assertion, it could only be done by laying upon them a heavy hand and a restraining fear that would tame their fiery spirits into subjection to a higher power. So, at least, it seemed.

The system of the church of the West was an almost inevitable consequence of the fall of the Western Empire before the successive assaults of the "barbarians" of central and western Europe. The "Dark Ages" followed, with all their confusion and turmoil. But the Church succeeded the Empire as the pacifier and ruler of the West. The Bishop of Rome, the father (pope) of the faithful, grasped firmly the sceptre that fell from the dead hand of the fallen Emperor and wielded it with a courage and a vigor that saved Roman civilization and Roman law from destruction. The story is long and thrilling and it cannot be told here. But, in theory, the Church was never identified with the Empire. Roman popes crowned monarchs of non-Roman races successors to the

ancient Roman rulers and bound them to the Church whose head had signified by their coronation that they were heaven-appointed and their empire "holy," with a holiness derived from the higher holiness of the Church.[1] The Holy Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire were bound together. Each of them carried one of those "two swords" which in the hands of the Lord Christ were "enough." In this appeal to the divine source and sanction of the laws to be enforced by the co-operative efforts of the two institutions lay, perhaps, the main secret of success. The "custom of Rome," that is, of the Roman Church, became the necessary rule of life if men were to be saved. Its compulsoriness was enforced by the portrayal before the imagination of a sensitive but uncultured people of the reality of the life after death. Not the hope of incorruption and immortality in God, but the desire to escape from being consigned for ever to the torments of hell after death, was the ground of the most effective appeal to those people. "What must I do to be saved?" now became, "How can I avoid the danger of going to hell and escape to heaven?"

This it is that accounts for the fact that we see the speculative mysticism of the Greek Catholic giving place in the West to the practical, aggressive, militant governmentalism of the Roman Catholic. The Roman Church might repeat the Greek creed substantially unchanged but to expect the Western multitudes to enter into it sympathetically was out of the question except in the case of a few favored individuals. The metaphysics of the East might stand intact but in practice the Roman *order* became the efficient instrument of salvation. The Greek "mysteries" became Roman "sacraments" (oath of

[1] The theory is expounded in Bryce, The Holy Roman Empire, Ch. VII.

allegiance) and the Greek mystical illumination gave place to a compulsory obedience to an administrative system. The inscrutable "essence" of deity became an almighty despot in the sky and the mysterious Godman became the fear-inspiring Vicegerent of God in heaven, whose thunders against sinners and benedictions on saints were echoed by his appointed vicegerent on earth —the Pope speaking as head of the Church. Thus, in the minds of the people whom the church sought to save, the churchman took the place once held by the theologian, obedience to commands the place formerly allowed to heavenly enlightenment, the alternative of a heaven of bliss or a hell of torment the place of immortality, on the one hand, and corruption, on the other hand.

The theoretical basis of the Roman system is laid in the work of the great monk Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. Living at the time when the lofty and complicated system of Roman government was already beginning to topple, he projected a theory of the meaning of the life of humanity in the world and of the forces that controlled its course that enabled the churchmen of later times to enforce upon the awakening conscience of western Europe a system of human control that appeared identical with the working of the divine government itself. Later thinkers modified his structure as the needs of their times seemed to require, but the main lines as laid down by the great architect remain still unchanged.

His renowned Confessions and his City of God are the principal works to be consulted. The former presents his meditations upon his own inner life, the latter his interpretation of the course of human life in this world. With the aid of the Jewish and Christian scriptures and

the church's creed he works out a divinely predetermined order of events showing the successive stages of the life of mankind as culminating in the age of the eternal Sabbath about to dawn. The features of especial interest to us are the following:

First and foremost, is Augustine's deep sense of his inner relation to God. A strong self-assertive personality himself, he must conceive God as the supreme, all-knowing, all-mastering personality—not the vague Somewhat of a pure mysticism or the unknowable "Essence" of the orthodox Trinity, but the One Definite Knowable Person with whom he and all other men had directly to do:[1] —"Who can call upon thee that knoweth thee not? For he that knoweth thee not may call on thee as other than thou art." "What art thou to me? In thy pity teach me to utter it. Or what am I to thee, that thou demandest love from me and, if I comply not, art wroth with me and dost menace me with grievous woes. . . . . Hide not thy face from me. Let me die that I may see thy face."[2] The relation of the man to God is felt to be personal, simple, immediate, impressive, terrible.

Directly connected with this thought of God is his intense conviction of the sinfulness of himself and all other men. Augustine was a monk and, in keeping with his monkish proneness to pore over the processes of his own soul and a morbid disesteem of the natural realm, he finds the natural life of men to be thoroughly evil. There are even times when he seems to find a morbid satisfaction in delineating the evil tendencies within himself, as if the more repugnant morally he could make out his nature to be, the greater must be his confidence that he had been delivered—the old paradox that the

[1]Conf. 1:1 [2]Conf. 1:5

severer our self-judgment the greater our self-assurance. And so he goes to work tracing the workings of an evil will in himself through all the stages of his life and finds there a confirmation of the judgment that he (and all other men) are naturally hateful to God:[1]—"Who remindeth me of the sin of my infancy? For in thy sight none is clear from sin, not even the infant whose life on earth is but a day. . . . . In the weakness of baby limbs, not in its will, lies its innocence. Myself have seen and known jealousy even in a babe." (!!) What is true of one is true of all. Man's will is universally opposed to the divine, man is hateful to God.

He supports this contention by his interpretation of the whole course of the world. Uniting the Genesis story of man's first transgression and condemnation with the Pauline doctrine of universal death as the fruit of universal sin, he arrives at the conclusion that in that first fatal deed all men were made sinful by nature, and rightly, since all men were seminally in Adam. Thus he reconciles the doctrine of the universal badness of men with the doctrine of the goodness of their Creator. Sinful deeds are the fruit of a sinful nature and the nature itself is therefore condemned—the famous doctrine of Original Sin.

The world being evil and God alone good, he adopts the life of the ascetic. Not only are the natural institutions of men means for the propagation of evil but the physical world itself is contaminated. The man who would seek the perfect goodness must withdraw from the world and devote himself exclusively to the God who is apart from it:[2]—"When I shall with my whole heart self cleave to thee, I shall nowhere have sorrow or labor; and my life

[1]Conf. 1.7 [2]Conf. X. 18

shall wholly live as wholly full of thee." But how is he to make the change from the sinful human nature to the holy and divine?

The answer is found in the Catholic view of the means and the method of salvation. It was through the personal influence of members of the Catholic Church that Augustine experienced an inward change from unhappiness to blessedness. The Church then became to him the one divine institution created by God for the purpose of imparting to men the grace that saves from sin. He therefore bowed to its authority, submitted to its baptism[1] and accepted its creed. He felt that he owed all (instrumentally) to the Church:[2]—"Indeed, I could not have believed the Gospel had not the authority of the Church constrained (commoveret) me." The authority to impart the grace that expels sin and purifies the soul dwells in the Church alone. Accordingly, the ministration of salvation becomes an act of ecclesiastical government. The divinely ordered career of humanity was now about to culminate in the great Church-State whose setting up marked the incoming of the kingdom of God on earth.

To institutionalize these views of Augustine, to make them the theoretical basis of a system that was to be set up among all peoples, to subject all governments to its authority and save from sin and hell all who would submit to it, was the great achievement of the Roman Church. Inasmuch as the celibate priesthood became the ruling officials of the church, submission to the hierarchy became the prime condition of salvation. Thus, to the rude untutored peoples of the West, the Church became the one authority competent to declare the conditions on which hung the issues of eternal life and death. The

[1]Conf. IX. 2 [2]Ep. c. Manich. 5

Catholic traditions, including the scriptures, the creed, the liturgy and the moral legislation, were all clothed with a halo of sanctity. All were from God. Obedience, rather than enlightenment, became the one supreme requisite in those who would be saved. To disobey any of the Church's laws was to fall under the wrath of God. Thus the priest became ruler as well as hierophant. He was separated from, and superior to, the layman. The secular state became tributary to the holy church. The priesthood became an organized hierarchy with the Bishop of Rome at their head. The sacraments that ministered salvation became the effective instruments of a sacred system of government with God at its head in heaven and the Pope of Rome, vicegerent of God, at its head on earth. Such was the ecclesiastical system that developed out of Augustinianism. Augustine's personal God had become a far-off Despot.

When the Western Church took over as its inheritance the Eastern Church's view of the antithesis of human nature to the divine, of matter to spirit, of the earthly to the heavenly, it made the way of salvation, as far as concerns man's part in it, the practice of asceticism—renunciation of self, natural goods and the present world. The ascetic became the truly typical Christian. The monks and nuns, having renounced everything, stood in the front rank. The clergy were monasticised. The people must follow the clergy as far as was practicable. But not fully, for then the human race would come to an end. But their defect could be remedied through submission to the priest and then the merits that were deposited in the church could be mediated to them through the sacraments in priestly hands. Accordingly, as we have

said, obedience, that is, submission of intellect and will, became the indispensable means of salvation on the side of the recipient. The administration of the sacraments by the church became the indispensable means on the divine side. At length the Pope, Boniface VIII, raised to the pinnacle of power, declares in the bull, Unam Sanctam (A.D. 1302), "We, moreover, declare, proclaim, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

Salvation became a matter of governmental administration. Sin became crime, violation of the will of the Almighty Monarch. His will is absolute, his laws inexorable, and retribution is sure and unerring. The guilt of transgression against such a Being is infinite and the punishment everlasting. All men are hopelessly doomed unless God himself intervene on man's behalf. This is *grace*. Sin is of man, grace is of God. Sin is propagated through natural channels, grace through the supernatural. The order of sinful nature is superseded by the order of grace. Its fountain-head is the Godman, Jesus Christ. By assuming our nature, without sin, from a virgin and by suffering in it the full due of human demerit he has acquired for human benefit infinite merit. Of this the Church is the divinely chosen depository. Her miraculous powers and her orthodoxy attest her exclusive right to minister the saving sacraments. These were now duly framed into a system, all the sacraments being necessary to salvation but not all of them (*e. g.*, not orders) necessary for all persons.

Baptism washes away the guilt of original sin but does not uproot the concupiscence that prompts the sinning. In *Confirmation* the initiate accepts his place in the church

and responsibility for his post-baptismal sins. In the *Eucharist,* the chief sacrament, Christ himself, very God and very man, is the real substance of the bread and wine, and his body and blood are really partaken of by the recipient. Christ is offered to God as the sacrifice for sins on behalf of both the living and the dead when he is lifted up in the hands of the priest. Confession by the penitent, on behalf of himself and others, followed by priestly absolution, precedes the observance of the Eucharist. In this way the door of salvation is kept open for all the baptized until the Judgment Day. The sacrament of *Penance* with "satisfaction" for misdeeds, *Extreme Unction* for the dying, *Marriage* for those who enter wedlock, and *Orders* for the consecration of priests to their holy office, complete the necessary provision for all the spiritual needs of men. According to the theory the divine scheme of salvation from sin and the Roman system of church government are inseparably united.

Comment: The story of the transition from the type of life in the Eastern Church to the Western type is in part the story of human betterment. For, notwithstanding the repulsiveness of the Roman system from the moral and religious point of view, there are certain marks of its superiority to the Eastern Church. There is a higher estimate of the present world and of life in it. Its preparatory relation to a world to come gives it an eternal significance. If divine nature and human nature are still viewed as mutually exclusive, nevertheless, the responsibility of the human person to the divine really brings the human into the sphere of the divine. Moreover, the whole life of man, individual and social, is brought under the sway of an inviolable law. This prepared the way for the

recognition of the moral law as immanent in human action. Finally, the increasing emphasis on the crucifixion of Jesus as significant of the redemptive power of the vicarious life in whomsoever found, the transfer of the emphasis on incarnation to an emphasis on atonement, from a metaphysical transmutation to the righting of an infinite wrong—all this tended to bring to the mind of the Christian people the consciousness of an all-absorbing task, rather than a subsidence into a condition of rest, as the true goal of life.

CHAPTER V

PROTESTANT ASSURANCE

The Roman Church sought to establish a system of law and order in Western Europe and partly succeeded. Salvation, she taught, came by the setting up of an efficient mode of government. That government was her own, transplanted into other lands. It was supposed to be of divine origin. The sacraments she ministered conveyed to men the divine grace that saved them. The sacraments were guarded by her discipline. Through her penitential system she sought to produce in men an acute sense of sin and a fear of its terrible penalties. The theoretical support of these claims and practices was found in such doctrines as the Fall of Man, Original Sin, Guilt, Atonement, Absolution. But mightiest of all in their influence on the popular feeling were the pictures of a present and future purgatory, where the baptized expiated and were purged from their post-baptismal sins, a final Judgment Day, an endless Hell for the unbaptized and finally impenitent, and a Heaven of bliss for the finally pure. Like the Jewish Church, the Roman Church dramatized the process of damnation and salvation. The figures and scenes of the drama were commonly taken to correspond to solid facts supernaturally communicated.

It is one thing, however, to arouse the human conscience and quite another thing to meet its demands. Rome failed to placate the feeling of guilt and the terror of hell in the hearts of the more serious-minded people,

and more especially so as learning spread and men began to read and muse over the New Testament without the directing aid of priest or clerk. For many, the sense of guilt was a heavier burden than the fear of hell, though the latter too was mostly very real to them. Moreover, the church's moral corruptions offended them and they began inquiring for a way of deliverance from guilt that was not dependent on the priests and the sacraments of the church. The importunate question of the Philippian jailer was reechoed by multitudes in the later mediaeval times with an earnestness and passion hitherto unparalleled. In this cry and the renewed response to it the inner soul of Protestantism found utterance. Paramount amid the fierce and bitter struggles of the Reformation—hallowed in our memories—was the question of the way of salvation from sin and hell.

The Protestants took over without serious question the great body of Catholic doctrines as divinely revealed but made a distinction between the revealed doctrines and the church's pretensions. It was the matter of *practice* that mainly stirred them to action. Catholic doctrines were revised only in so far as the practical (in the deepest sense) needs demanded. Men who, throughout their whole life, were kept in uncertainty with respect to their relation to God and their personal destiny could not live in blessedness and peace. For the Roman Church brought them only into "the way to salvation" and then made its ultimate realization dependent on their continued obedience to her divine commands. They were always possibly *to be* saved but never saved. Assurance was wanting. The certainty of having found the truth could alone supply it. And thus it came

about in the end that, while Catholics relied on ceremony, Protestants rested on doctrine, or the knowledge of the truth. What, then, amid all the variant expressions of Protestant belief, was its central doctrine?

I. THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF PROTESTANT DOCTRINE IS BUILT AROUND THE IDEA OF SALVATION. THAT DOCTRINE IS AT BOTTOM A THEORY OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD, THAT IS, THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW REFORMED

1. *God is the All-knowing, Almighty Maker of the world.* This is the ultimate and sufficient answer to all human questioning about the universe. Being its Maker, he is also its Ruler, a ruler with absolute rights as against his creatures and no duties toward them. Among them is Man, endowed with those intellectual and moral capacities that render him capable of receiving intelligently a communication of the thought and will of God —that is, if God choose to give it. That, it is affirmed, he has done. The Monarch of the Universe, the one Supreme Autocratic King, has of his own will and for his own glory—no higher aim possible—made known to man a holy, inviolable Law. By obedience to this law man was to receive the reward of eternal blessedness, by disobedience the penalty of eternal misery. Man is wholly in the hands of God. He is wholly a subject of the divine law. All *rights* are God's. All *duties*—no rights—are man's. This is the basic orthodox Protestant view of the relation of God and Man.

That this is all true is said to be declared by the rational human understanding as it apprehends the nature

of the world, of Man and, thereby, of God. This natural, rational knowledge is confirmed by the supernatural, super-rational knowledge which God has been pleased, of his own sovereign will, to give to certain chosen persons through miraculous revelation. The revelation in its beginnings was given with the beginning of the race, was progressively unfolded through successive ages and was finally completed by the personal coming of Jesus Christ to the world and by the subsequent gift of his Holy Spirit of truth to his first messengers. It is now committed to writing in the Old and New Testaments. These present to us the one, holy, inspired declaration of the will and purpose of God. In them the character and method of the divine government of men and the world are set forth clearly, so that every one may be able to know them for himself. These scriptures are the statutes of Heaven.

This supernatural revelation confirms, purifies and completes that natural knowledge of God's will toward man and of man's subjection to it, which is contained in his moral consciousness. But the revelation does vastly more, because in the course of time a deeper need of man's arose. The revelation gives also, on the one hand, the knowledge of the true cause of the present and future miseries of men and, on the other hand, the further knowledge of the provision which God, the All-seeing, had made from all eternity for the deliverance of a portion of the human race from the consequences of their misdeeds.

Hereby we have learned that the first human pair, in spite of a plain declaration of the divine law, set their will against the will of their Creator and were sentenced

to death temporal and eternal as a penalty. But, in order to bestow on man an unmerited blessing, God communicated a knowledge of the means He would take to bring this purposed good to men. Here was the beginning of a two-fold revelation—of law and its penalties, of grace and its rewards; that is, a revelation of the nature and consequences of sin and a revelation of the nature and consequences of salvation. *Sin is criminality,* for it is a violation of law. The divine favor is forfeited and the sinner is left to himself, helpless and lost. The penalty is positive, not merely negative. All human suffering and death are sent in execution of the divine sentence. Moreover, the first sin is decreed by the divine will to be charged upon the whole natural posterity of the first parents in the double form of an inherited inner corruption of their nature, which was originally pure, and of imputed guilt. Human nature, universally, is therefore fallen, corrupt, depraved, evil and condemned. Left to themselves men sink lower and lower in sin and can never escape the penalty by any means in their power. The guilt and ill-desert of their crime are to be computed in terms of the dignity of him against whom they sinned—it is infinite. Hence the merited punishment is infinite. It can never be expiated by a finite being. The sin and the suffering are both eternal in duration. Thus far, of the negative side of the Protestant doctrine of salvation. We turn now to the positive side.

2. *The divine government is an administration of justice according to the ill-desert of the criminal but it is also an administration of mercy, so far, at least, as mercy is to be exercised.* "God must be just, he may be merciful." By the power and right of his irresistible will God eter-

nally decrees whatever comes to pass. As he, by the exercise of his divine prerogative, decreed that every violation of his unchangeable and irrevocable law must be expiated by a penalty commensurate with the infinite guiltiness of the sin, so also by the right and power of his free sovereign will he has decreed that another should make the infinite expiation on man's behalf and in his stead. Such an act of God's, we repeat, is an act purely of mercy—for even if one might contend that man in his state of purity had claims on the divine favor, that (supposed) right had been forfeited by sin.

But this act of mercy must not be exercised in a way that would violate the principle of justice. That would be to make God a violator of the very law he had commanded man to keep. The penalty *must* be executed to the full. Behold, then, the divine mercy! God himself, the offended lawgiver and stern Judge, has provided a substitute for guilty man. That substitute is himself God —Divine, the Son of God, co-eternal and co-equal with Himself. By his own free act and in obedience to his Father's will the substitute assumes human nature to himself, uniting it to the divine nature in his own single person. Hereby he is made competent, as man, to bear man's penalty, being himself sinless and deserving no penalty of his own; and, as God, he is competent to bear it to the full and to expiate the guilt. Luther said,[1] "There is no room for mercy and grace to work over us and in us or to help us to eternal blessings and to salvation, unless enough has been done to satisfy righteousness perfectly." And Calvin said,[2] "It is of great importance to our interests that he who was to be our mediator should be both true God and man. . . . . It was such a

[1] See McGiffort, Protestant Theology Since Kant, page 48.

[2] Institutes II. Ch. XIII. 1, 2, 3

necessity as arose from the heavenly decree on which the salvation of men depended. . . . . The most merciful God, when he determined on our redemption, became himself our Redeemer in the person of his only-begotten Son. . . . . Our Lord made his appearance as a real man, to act as his (man's) substitute in his obedience to the Father, to lay down his flesh as the price of satisfaction to God's justice and to suffer the punishment we had deserved in the same nature in which the offence has been committed." This, then, is the "plan of salvation" as ordered by high heaven from all eternity, man being in no sense a partner in it or aware of it until after he had sinned. No contingencies could possibly obviate the execution of this plan. The plan and the execution of it are alike wholly in the hand of God.

The concrete execution of the plan occurred at a definitely predetermined date and in a definitely prescribed manner. At the fixed date the Son of God made his personal advent into the world as the physical son of a virgin. His nature was pure and sinless. The actual personal (physical and spiritual) penalties to which man was sentenced were now imposed and really executed upon him. In his sufferings on the cross Jesus was truly enduring in his own person the wrath of God and at that definite time made a true and perfect atonement for human sin. Hear Calvin again:[1] "Now, because our guilt rendered us liable to a curse at the heavenly tribunal of God, the condemnation of Christ before Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea, is stated, in the first place, that we may know that in this righteous person was inflicted the punishment that belonged to us. We could not escape the terrible judgment of God; to deliver us from it Christ

[1] Inst. II, XVI. 3

submitted to be condemned even before a wicked and profane mortal. Had he been assassinated by robbers or murdered in a popular tumult, in such a death there would have been no appearance of satisfaction. But when he is placed as a criminal before the tribunal—when he is accused and overpowered by the testimony of witnesses and by the mouth of the judge is condemned to die—we understand from these circumstances that he sustained the character of a sinner and a malefactor. . . . . at the same time that he was loaded with the guilt of others, but had none of his own. . . . . This is our absolution, that the guilt which made us obnoxious to punishment is transferred to the person of the Son of God. . . For we ought particularly to remember this satisfaction, that we may not spend our whole lives in terror and anxiety, as though we were pursued by the righteous vengeance of God, which the Son of God had transferred to himself." Calvin goes on to say: "Moreover, the species of death which he suffered is fraught with a peculiar mystery. The cross was accursed, not only by the judgment of men but by the decree of the divine law. Therefore, when Christ is lifted up upon it he renders himself obnoxious to the curse. . . . (His suffering was spiritual as well as physical). If Christ had died a merely corporeal death no end would have been accomplished by it; it was requisite that he should feel the severity of the divine vengeance in order to appease the wrath of God and satisfy his justice." It is evident that the Protestant orthodox theory of salvation was at bottom the Roman Catholic theory more completely and consistently rounded out and purged of its churchism.

3. *Undoubtedly the orthodox Protestant theologians were quite unconscious of the fact that they had arbitrarily metamorphosed the whole personal career of Jesus into a theatrical dramatization of their own legalistic jurisprudence.* The artificiality and unreality of the supposed procedure of a heavenly court whose forms are acted out on earth is manifest at a glance to one who finds the meaning of human history *immanent* in human actions. We need not wonder that a modern Calvinist, in his attempt to cling to the older view has sought to remove the stumbling-block by making of the actual historic events merely a *manifestation* of the judgment and of the execution of penalty that transpired in the heavenly realm. Why make of the acts of bad men who were filled with the spirit of the rankest injustice an exhibition of divine justice?

We must remember that the foregoing scheme of salvation was not viewed as a scheme on paper but as fact, fact definitely ordered and definitely announced *before* the actual events took place and more definitely and completely declared *after* the occurrence. The whole was regarded as actually accomplished at the time and place appointed and the predestined outcome was believed to be certain of fulfilment in time and eternity, in this world and in the world to come. The Christian Gospel was a divine announcement of the facts for the benefit of the hearers. Here was the ground of assurance that was then offered to the anxious seeking soul.

The nations of western Europe had long groaned under the corrupt and oppressive government set up by the Roman Church. The Protestant Reformation was, on one side of it, a revolution against that government.

The doctrinal support of the revolution was found in a theory of a divine system that made the hated Roman rule an anomaly and a violation of the government of heaven. Protestants believed in this government and felt that they were placing themselves under its authority and protection. Consequently, when they believed it to be exercised in their behalf, they feared nothing here or hereafter.

There are elements of great value in the Protestant conception of government and of the necessity of every purpose of human betterment conforming to the laws that operate in the government of mankind. The view that heaven and earth, time and eternity, God and man are inwardly related and that one supreme purpose runs through all the ages and all existences, it is an unutterably grand achievement of the human mind to have reached. But the character of that law, the purpose that constitutes it, the manner of its operation and the relation of the forms and institutions that arise in history to it must be interpreted far differently, or there is no ministry of salvation to be found in it. To us of the present day, who have become aware of the *relatively* small part that institutions of government—legislatures, statutes, administrations, courts of justice, execution of sentences, and such like—play in the actual making and moulding of the lives of the people, the Reformation scheme of salvation seems very alien to the character of the forces that actually make for human good or ill. All "government" reposes on the inner character of the people governed and on the manner in which their minds regard one another and the world around them. After all, the government of any people is identical with the

way those people live. One can be called their governor in so far as the character of his personality penetrates theirs and imparts itself to them. Saviour and Governor are always one and the same personality.

The Reformation doctrine of salvation was, then, a development and a correction of the Roman Catholic view of the saving act as at bottom a process of criminal law. The forms and means of enforcement are viewed as external to the life of the criminal. The majesty of the law and the rights of the lawgiver are fully vindicated. This, and not the realization of the worth of all the persons concerned, including the criminal himself, is made the governing interest of the entire scheme. This is its first fatal defect.

4. The manner in which we view this scheme today rises out of the plain fact that *Protestantism has at length outlived it*. The view of the administration of justice and the character of the government on which it is supposed to repose do not correspond to the demands of the truly moral life. We have found that actual conformity with it would prove destructive to our most precious interests. Governments and courts are for men and not men for courts and governments. Not in the formal proceedings of a criminal court but in the loves and caresses, the sympathies and mutual ministries, the forbearances and patience, the vicariousness and undying confidence on the part of each and all of us in relation to one another in the life of the family and of the home, do we discover the richest clue to the character of the relations between God and men. In comparison with such a life lived by men in common how artificial do the inherited forms of court proceedings often appear! How often it has turned out

that true justice is best meted out when these forms are left in abeyance! For righteousness and love, justice and mercy, are not opposed to each other but in their ultimate meaning are one.

But in this, our adverse, criticism of the orthodox Protestant "plan of salvation" we should do less than justice to our theological forebears were we to fail to look beyond these theoretical representations to the moral and religious realities that their doctrine, in part, revealed but, in part, concealed from view. Let us ferret out the profound convictions that sought expression but found it only in perverted form in their theories. We shall find these suggested in that part of their theory which relates to the application of the work of salvation to the individual.

II. THE TRUE SALVATION OF THE PROTESTANT LAY IN HIS NEW AWARENESS OF A HIGHER AND MORE BLESSED RELATION TO GOD THAN CATHOLICISM COULD REVEAL

The spirit that constituted the Protestant religious reformation, as we have intimated, was as truly concealed as it was revealed in the abstract scheme of government in which it was clothed. Why did the Protestant mind turn hopefully to any such doctrine as we have set forth? The answer is at hand and it is plain and simple. It was because the Protestant had entered into an assurance of blessedness in the very presence of a holy God and he sought to justify this feeling of assurance to his reason. The Protestant doctrine was an apology for the Protestant faith. The great question that pressed for solution was this: How can a man be justified in cherish-

ing this assurance? What ground can there possibly be for it, in view of the deep consciousness of sin and ill-desert which a man must always feel as he thinks of the God who is all-holy? And the answer was, as we have seen: Sin is to be viewed as a crime; crime can be expiated only by punishment; when once the punishment has been inflicted, it cannot be repeated, the criminality is removed, the sufferer is no longer guilty, he is now as truly justified before the law as if he had never broken the law; knowing this, the at-one-time criminal can and ought to be at peace; justice itself commands him to be at peace. So far, then, as regards the reason that was offered for the Protestant sense of blessedness.

But, after all, this was a very precarious footing for the assurance of *personal* blessedness. For the assurance was threatened very seriously the moment one became uncertain whether *he* was one of those whose personal guilt had actually been annulled. The doctrine of the unconditional divine election and predestination of certain persons to the final blessedness of heaven was offered as a guarantee to the doubting ones that their salvation was absolutely secured. But it left them still hanging in agonizing suspense, inasmuch as it was also held that there were some men who were non-elect and destined to the endless hell of the wicked. Every one was forced to ask the further question, "Am I one of the elect? How can I know it? How can I know that the salvation so amply provided has been or will continue to be applied to *me*?" The crucial test of any doctrine of salvation always lies in the *application* of it to the particular

individual who is concerned to ask for it. The Protestant thinkers had an answer which was supposed to meet the need. We turn to it.

It was said that while the *ground* of salvation lay in the substitutionary atonement by Christ, thereby making it possible for a just God to set the sinner free, the actual bestowment of salvation upon the individual occurred in a two-fold manner. First, he was justified, that is, restored to a perfect legal *standing* before God, the Judge. Secondly, the pure and holy nature of the Redeemer was imparted to the individual, the process beginning in his regeneration and being completed in his sanctification, the holy *state* which is to be his perfectly at death. The former of these received the main emphasis in early Protestant times because it enabled men to set aside the complicated Catholic scheme of gradual and uncertain justification, with all its compromises. But in due course of time the latter of these two steps in salvation became practically the more important because it was truer than the other to the Protestant genius. For it drew attention emphatically to the significance of the inner conscious life of the human spirit.

By what means was this two-fold benefit bestowed on the individual? The simple, straightforward answer was: Through his personal faith.[1] How greatly the traditional Roman way of salvation was simplified; how easily also its whole complicated structure of church-works that were to be, in their own measure, procurative of salvation, was cast into the discard by this plain statement! But, one might object: "After all, does not this make of faith itself a work that merits salvation as its own fitting reward? If so, then you have only substituted an inner

[1]This answer was partly nullified by the Protestants who retained the superstitious view of sacraments as imparting salvation.

good work for an outer." The Protestant answer was: "Not so, inasmuch as this very faith is itself the gift of God, a gift secured by Christ's meritorious death and imparted to the individual by the action of the divine Spirit on his mind and heart. The faith is a part of the process of inward renewal. It is the first stage of the operation of the indwelling Spirit as he gives to men his secret testimony of the favor of God upon the individual."

Very naturally, therefore, the early Protestant made much of this faith, at the very same time that he held that God might have taken some other means of conveying salvation, had He chosen to do so. Faith was no mere intellectual belief or assent to the truth but a warm, living, personal confidence in God. Says Luther:[1] "It is clear that to a Christian man his faith suffices for everything and that he has no need of works for justification." "Not that I am acceptable to God on account of the worthiness of my faith," says the Heidelberg Catechism.[2] "We believe that, to attain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Ghost kindleth in our hearts an upright faith," says the Belgic Confession;[3] "which embraceth Jesus Christ with all his merits, appropriates him and seeks nothing more besides him." Calvin[4] exalts the worth of faith by saying, "Faith consists not in ignorance, but knowledge, and that not only of God but also of the divine will. . . . . Faith consists in a knowledge of God and of Christ." But he is careful not to put personal faith on a level with the revelation given in the scriptures: "Faith has an important relation to the word and can no more be separated from it than the rays from the sun whence they proceed. . . . . Now, we shall have a complete definition of faith if we say that it is a steady and

[1] Primary Works—Wace and Buchheim page 262.
[2] Question 61
[3] Article XXII
[4] Inst. III Ch. I, 2 ff

certain knowledge of the divine benevolence toward us, which, being founded on the truth of the gratuitous promise in Christ, is both revealed to our minds and confirmed to our hearts by the Holy Spirit." Calvin recognized the deep experimental, emotional side of faith and he had a care not to allow it to be lost sight of. Hence he distinguishes it from any merely intellectual process: "The assent which we give to the divine word is from the heart rather than the head and from the affections rather than the understanding. . . . Christ cannot be known without the sanctification of the Spirit. Consequently, faith is absolutely inseparable from a pious affection." He insists[1] on the experience of an inner" secret testimony" given by the Spirit to the believer. Accordingly, the knowledge of faith "consists more in certainty than in comprehension." Not even the holy scriptures have authority independently of this secret witness: "Nothing is effected by the word without the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Whence it appears that faith is far superior to human intelligence. Nor is it enough for the mind to be illuminated by the Spirit of God, unless the heart also be strengthened and supported by his power." There is a[2] "secret energy of the Spirit by which we are introduced to the enjoyment of Christ and all his benefits." Faith, to Calvin, was not a merely receptive or passive attitude but embraced intellectual, moral and emotional qualities. Indeed it becomes the living force in the soul by which the soul is united with God—a satisfactory substitute for the Catholic sacraments. It is the misfortune of Protestantism that political, economic and ecclesiastical interests crowded to the front, absorbed the attention of thinkers, and left the deepening of this

[1]Loc. cit. 14, 33 [2]Inst. III Ch. I, 1

profound experience to the freer Protestant bodies, such as Baptists, Quakers, Pietists, and to an older body, the Moravians. This inner consciousness of participation in the higher life, the life divine, was the truly liberating force in Protestantism. When it sprang up at last in the Methodist revival with unquenchable force it quickly made its way out into the modern world and has become the mainstay of the heart of Protestant Christianity.

Here, then, we see that which was of far profounder significance for Protestantism than its theory of government. The Protestant assurance was not at bottom an inference from an authoritatively proclaimed governmental order and process but such an insight into the life within and the world without as makes one aware that he is constantly in immediate relation with God, that this relation comes as a gift from the higher world. This it was that gave to the career of Jesus Christ and to the ancient Christian scriptures their true meaning. This inner relation is the secret of the man who grasps it, and it becomes in each participant in it the power that enables him to rise above his former self and reach ever out to the better, the holier, the divine.

When we turn from the richness of this inner life and its fruitage in moral betterment in the lives of men in all lands to the formal doctrines of Protestant Confessions, we perceive that the Protestant intellect, fashioned as it was by the Catholic authoritarian methods of exposition current in those times, fell far short of doing justice to the Protestant heart with its unquenchable consciousness of living unity with God, a love for God inseparably united with efforts to save and bless erring men. The

intelligence, the conscience of the modern Christian must remain unsatisfied until it reaches a better interpretation.

III. THE BASIS OF THIS BETTER INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE OF SALVATION WE FIND WITHIN THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT THE MOMENT WE TURN OUR ATTENTION AWAY FROM ITS FORMS OF DOCTRINE TO THE QUALITY OF THE LIFE WHICH THOSE DOCTRINES WERE INTENDED TO PRESERVE

In Protestantism there is an outreach of the human spirit to attain to the fuller life of man that goes beyond its earlier efforts. The character of this human outreach we shall seek to set forth more fully in subsequent chapters. In the present we shall be content to mention some of the affirmations of Protestantism that point to it, affirmations which were particularly offensive to Catholicism. As Schleiermacher pointed out long ago, the point of the Catholic attack indicates in each case the line of the Protestant advance.

1. The head and front of the Protestant offending was its seeming secularization of the sacred, its profaning of the holy, its reduction of the heavenly to the earthly and of the divine to the human. There appeared an uprising of the secular political order against the rights of Holy Church. The church's yoke was broken from the neck of the state and its divine authority seemingly usurped when the state rallied the people to its own support in the rebellion against the church. It even went so far as to nationalize the church as it existed within the bound-

aries of each Protestant state, and to bring it under state control—a policy directly opposed to the great mediaeval system in which the Holy Catholic Church had united to itself the Holy Roman Empire as its ally and subordinate. This happened in England, Scotland, Holland, Scandinavia, many parts of the German Empire, and at one time threatened to become general. How horrifying it must have been to the minds of all to whom the church seemed the Divine Mother of all the saints, to witness the activities of the secular potentates displacing ecclesiastical officials from their high places assigned to them by divine authority, and justifying this wanton invasion of the church's realm by affirming the divine right of kings and princes, as against the divine rights of popes, and the divine rights of the common layman, as against the divine rights of the priesthood!

2. Associated with this offense against the sacred institution was the appropriation of the church's revenues to common purposes, whether personal or political. That is to say, the Catholic saw that the economic interest played a powerful part in the Protestant movement and he condemned it for that reason. For the every-day affairs of common life and of common people were being treated as of more account than the heavenly ministration of the saving sacraments. Protestantism seemed but common worldliness masquerading under the name of religion in order to attach a sacred character to its ill-gotten gains. The reduction of the number of the sacraments from seven to two, and the doubt thrown on the efficacy even of these to save, followed by the open repudiation by Protestant Dissenters of the whole doctrine of sacramental efficacy, confirmed the Catholic contention

that Protestantism was in principle antisacramental and only clung to the two sacraments because it shrank from the consequences that might ensue from a thoroughgoing consistency. That is to say, Catholicism saw in Protestantism a renunciation, in principle, of faith in the communication of supernatural blessings to mankind. One had a right to expect in due time a distinct repudiation of the doctrine of the divine incarnation, of the divine revelation and of the divine institution of salvation to men. Thus the entire life and career of mankind would be made to repose on a purely natural foundation. Therefore marriage would take rank higher than celibacy, the family higher than the church, physical parentage higher than the fatherhood of the priest, and the pursuit of natural goods take precedence of that life of renunciation which was the Catholic Church's ideal. And, to the eye of the Catholic observer, this too came to pass in due time.

Might not the consequences of the success of Protestantism be of the direst kind? Might not the thoughts of men turn from heaven to earth, from the high world-forgetful contemplation of the divine to the understanding of the purely human? Might not the exploratory genius of man take precedence of the spirit of devotion, shake off the restraint of authority and leave no mystery unattacked by the human intellect, no sacred enclosure safe from profanation by human feet? Might not the formulas of science displace the liturgies of the church and the pursuit of the goods of nature or reverence for nature take the place of the worship of God? Seemingly, it was to avert these direful consequences and save true religion from its foes that Giordano Bruno was burnt for

his free speculations, Galileo was forced to recant and Protestant martyrs perished by the hundred in the fire.

Were the Catholics the true interpreters of Protestantism or were the early Protestant Confessions of faith its true interpretations? Might not the Protestant faith turn out to be a profounder and richer faith than either the Protestants or the Catholics of those days were able to understand? Might not the Protestant repudiation of the Catholic system be the outcome of a deeper religious life than the Catholic, an experience that could no more be nurtured by the Catholic system than a full-grown man can be nourished on the diet of a youth? If it be true, as we have said, that the idea of salvation is basic to the whole body of religious thought, then the answer to the above questions must commence with a restatement of the approach to this fundamental conception.

CHAPTER VI

THE MODERN PROTESTANT POINT OF VIEW

The theories of salvation which we have briefly reviewed were erected largely on the basis of a belief that a body of valid information had been given to men concerning the relation between God and men, God's purpose in reference to them, the verdict he had pronounced upon their ways and their character, and the provision he had made for their good. Many people still feel that if there be no such valid information available we can have no reliable doctrine of salvation here and no clear assurance of a better life and a better state, or a worse life and a worse state, yet to come. However that may be, we must make up our minds quietly to face the realities and adjust ourselves to them.

Of some things we all are sure—we are ever certain that there is a future for us, we are ever peering into it with the aim of discovering its secret; it has for us a dual character, being bad or good, and there is in us a power of adjustment. The issues of life seem to us to be adjusted from within. We exercise the power of self-direction. This, at any rate, is our universal human faith that comes to light in the Protestant self-affirmation. We are not weary of the world. We are not afraid to live. We do not face the future with shrinking. We admire the young child when it challenges the future and plunges without fear into the great shadows of the forest of life. We bow in loyalty before the heroes who spring into the

battle with dauntless courage. For we feel that such men and such children are only true to themselves and to us. We would not have it ordered otherwise than it is now. We would not have it, if we could, that every one of us should have the information requisite to secure us in advance against all danger, with the consequent loss of the yearning to accomplish the thing that seems forbidden to us. This very uncertainty it is that gives the *tang* to life. That alone could be salvation which, so far from sparing us the task of working out our destiny, magnifies the imperative that we do so and quickens our powers in anticipation of the struggle. This is the soul of a modern Protestantism.

The experiences of life and the processes of reflection by which through a period of four centuries we have reached this position are not to be traced in this essay, but a dispassionate estimate of the religious life of the Protestantism of these times will make it plain, I think, that while we are still the heirs to much of the best that was to be found in the Protestantism of the Reformation, many of its formal doctrines have ceased to impart to our minds the needed impulse to fight the battle of life bravely and the confidence that we shall win it. The Christian message of salvation demands restatement. Certain fundamental principles of our modern Protestant religious life are basic to our constructive study of the subject.

I. FROM THE MODERN PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN STANDPOINT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING IN ALL THE WORLD IS THE CONSCIOUS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE BETTER LIFE.

The familiar picture of Luther at Worms standing alone in the presence of the members of the Imperial Diet and the assembled dignitaries of the Roman Church, with the great words falling from his lips: "Here I stand. I can no other. So help me God!" present a dramatic moment in human history. The striking fact in the scene is the man standing there in his conscious selfhood and confronting unafraid the whole might of the established order of church and state, because he feels within himself a divine constraint to do just his deed. His action is expressive of the conviction that in the immediate personal relation to God is found the highest ground of all human conduct. To this all other "authorities" must be forever subordinate. All institutions among men, however hoary with age or glorious in repute, must be but a means to this high end. They have a right *to be*, only in so far as they minister to this divine relationship. Reversing this order, they become tyrannies to be resisted to the death.

How comes it that the impressive scene at Worms has been so far-reaching, so heartening to the faith of multitudes? Because it has aroused in each one who has felt its influence a new sense of the sacredness of his own personality, an awareness of his own right of access to the Highest, and a conviction of his own mission to the world of men. This is the thing of importance for each

of us. Until this point is reached in our career we are unable to feel sure that we have entered upon the better life. But this once attained, everything henceforward takes on a character correspondingly new. God having spoken to us, the world is our native sphere—its terrors gone, its friendship assured, the physical universe itself our helper.

This expresses not only the genius of Protestantism, it is the heart of the Christian faith itself. The Author of this faith himself once stood alone facing an indifferent, cowardly or hostile world but, supported by the assurance, "and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me," he was able, in spite of—nay, by means of—his seeming defeat, to project the quality of his personality into that same world with transforming power and win from it step by step an acknowledgment of his indispensability to its life. Despite our many timid and degrading reactions from this noblest of all incentives, it still stands as the mightiest and finally irresistible claim upon the latent energies of our nature. It is the unfading light that beacons the sailor over a dark and stormy sea to port. Men may profess supreme allegiance to their great institutions—church, school, state—but standing far above these in natural human esteem are the actual men and women, the great creative spirits, whose individual lives stand out on the horizon as epitomes of the life of whole peoples. In such men a whole nation may find its own ideal. The story of the rise of the great historic Christian bodies is the story of the working of the fuller interpretation of life which some individual has brought into action by his advent. What is true as respects the creative influence operating in

great aggregations of people is also true of the life of the smaller local communities. In short, the history of the Christian faith is itself the story of the human personality coming to its true selfhood.

But the story of the Christian faith is not to be understood apart from the life of the race. The Christian faith, in the aspect of it referred to, but brings to clear light the source of every great creative and recuperative force at work in history. The *man* is never a mere means to an economic, political, ecclesiastical or social order or to all of these put together. To make him such would be to pervert his nature and reverse the predetermined destiny of mankind. All institutions or orders are really aggregations of the ways in which human persons, the world over, conduct themselves toward one another and impart their inner character directly to one another. Men make them and unmake them as the need requires. They come and go, but men go on forever. They are instruments, men, the agents. Personality holds the supreme place in our human world. This is the great truth laid hold of in the Christian faith. Its progress among any people is exhibited by the growing strength and clearness of their sense of personal worth.

1. *The power and prerogative of self-judgment decide the locus of the highest court of appeal among us.* Courts of justice but bring to light and action the quality and working of the life that we live. The end that is served by the courts is not the subjection of him who is judged to a power that is purely outside or alien to himself. The aim is rather to reveal to him and to those who witness the trial the character of the pronouncement which they all would pass themselves under the same circumstances.

The public administration of justice reaches its ideal end only when, and in so far as, the pronouncement of the court becomes a self-pronouncement. The aim, as far as the one on trial is concerned, is the same as the aim for all, namely, to disclose to him the real sentence which he, in his true selfhood, would pronounce on his own deeds. The aim of justice is personal salvation, that is, the realization of one's true selfhood.

In the Christian faith, especially, is this brought to light. The Christian teacher seeks not to convict other men of sin and pronounce judgment on them but to make his own self-judgment theirs. His business is not to charge men with being sinners but to awaken in them that latent power of self-judgment by whose action they are enabled to say, "I am a sinner. God be merciful to me." No man in his appeal to his fellows is competent to go further than this. Or, if I dare to say to my fellow-man, "You are a sinner," I do it, not as one who possesses information about him or authority over him, but I am only speaking on his behalf as I should be willing to have him speak on my behalf. The man's self-estimate must come into action in the end or all is in vain.

We see, then, the meaning of the vigorous and successful Protestant protest against the priestly pronouncement of absolution upon the penitent. The priest was not supposed to speak from himself as an individual but on behalf of the institution, the church, whose official representative he was. But this was an offense of like character to the assumption of personal authority over others. For it was to set the conscience of the order above the conscience of the man—an intolerable violation of his prerogative. The church stood not nearer to

God than did the man. No man or society can absolve me from sin just as no man or society can accuse me of sin with right except in so far as he or it utters the voice of God speaking in my own soul. If then, as a matter of fact, individuals pass judgment on one another, such judgments are valid only in so far as he who judges interprets truly the judgment which the other, when truly self-aware, would pass on himself.

Now the great basic fact in the newer Protestant interpretation of the Christian salvation is the personal experience of betterment. (See footnote.)[1] The question, how I came to have this experience, is a legitimate subject for investigation, but it is not yet fully answered. Similarly, of the question, how others came to share the experience with me. But all such problems arise out of the action of a conscious selfhood that makes for itself the final pronouncement as to the reality, the character and the meaning of its own conscious life.

2. *The Protestant religious experience has immediate reference to moral action and embraces the affirmation of personal betterment.* It pertains, that is, to the realm of the practical. It is attained, not by retirement from the affairs of men and the objects of the senses in order that one may contemplate in silence the mystery of existence or the nature of ultimate being, but it occurs in the

[1]The term 'experience' refers here not to some psychophysical event known by observation or inference to another person, but to an occurrence within the mind of him whose experience it is. Nor does it mean some event that stands out separate from all other events in his memory. The mystery of memory has not yet been solved, we do not know just how and when the 'subconscious' in our mind passes into the conscious, nor the latter into the former. We refer here, the rather, to the one unbroken series of thoughts, volitions and feelings which are unified in my mind in such a way that I can call them mine in a sense in which no other can call them his. They are not mere happenings *to* my mind but they occur *within* my mind. They are 'experiences' because they belong to one life-long experience in which I am aware of myself as present to them all. Hence, in the end, I am myself the authoritative expounder of those events.

midst of the toil and strain of the common life. It occurs not in the moment of unutterable ecstasy, when one feels himself exalted into the realm from which all that is physical and temporal becomes nothingness, but it springs up in the heart when the eternal significance of the physical and temporal conditions of our life flashes on our spirit. It comes to us when we have heard the summons to a great task of which our present task is a part, when we feel ourselves laid hold of by an obligation to achieve the hitherto unaccomplished, when we come under the control of an unqualified imperative to do the perfect deed, to live the perfect life.

Accordingly, the Protestant religious experience bears the scars of the smitings of conscience. In the prospect of that unaccomplished task which has been held unremittingly before us, the whole of our past, even at its best, is a coming-short, a failure, a dereliction of duty—guilt. The Protestant has accordingly, a sense of sin far outreaching in its severity the Catholic. Sin is never for him a mere defect of nature, or ignorance, or the beclouding of the spiritual through its imprisonment in the material. It is a matter of the will, a self-direction to an evil end. Nothing ever merely happens to us. We constitute our own character. For the Protestant, all the relations of life are summed up in the personal relation. God is to him everlastingly a person and all the misdeeds of his life take on the character of a personal offense, a violation of personal worth, a crime. It is not the misfortunes of life that oppress the Protestant, but its misdeeds, each of which carries with it this same perversion of the will. A marked feature of the Protestant judgment is its uncompromising severity.

But this is only the obverse side of the Protestant religious experience. It is not merely or mainly an experience of gloom, or depression, or helplessness but an experience of vast empowerment of will, of capacity for the achievement of the hitherto unattained. Indeed, the secret of the sense of sin and failure lies in the coming upon one of the power of the Mightier within him. The very possibility of our passing the sentence of condemnation on our past lies in our present transcendence of the past. So radical and decisive is the change that it is as though one stood in the criminal dock in the high court of Heaven and heard at one moment the charge of guilt and in the next moment the irrevocable decree of release from the charge. Hence the thorough-going repudiation by Protestants of the bargaining casuistry of the Roman Church—its penitential system, its indulgences, its purgatory, because the whole seemed to them a complicated device for blurring the inward recognition of the inviolable and eternal law of life. Hence also the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith sprang from the sense of deliverance as no mere *dismissal* of an accusation of guilt, no "letting go," no mere *restoration* to a pristine condition of innocence lost long ago, but the gaining of a positive rightness, a real fulfillment of the law of uprightness within the soul. To understand the real basis of that doctrine we must go beyond the formal statement of it, which the times seemed to require, to that self-direction of the will to the higher life without which the doctrine would have been only a means of promoting a spirit of lawlessness.

The Protestant religious experience registers the Christian conscious transition from moral failure to joyful

strength. Prior to this conversion the effort to master one's lower nature seemed thwarted by a law of the sin warring in the physical members against the law of conscience. But now the situation is reversed. Bondage to the evil has given place to liberty to the good. The man feels that he is free. Henceforward there is a definite self-commitment to every "cause" that is supported by the moral judgment.

This does not mean that for the subject of this experience the moral struggle has ceased. On the contrary, it is intensified. The awareness of defect is never wanting in the presence of the new moral demands that continually arise, and yet with this the certainty of moral betterment is not obliterated but rather confirmed. There is no looking backward to a fancied better state from which we have fallen but a prophetic anticipation of the better ever more perfectly to be realized.

3. *The new confidence in respect to one's own future is reflected outwards in a new estimate of the worth of one's fellowmen.* This new confidence in one's own future begets a new hope for theirs. In them there come to light qualities hitherto undiscovered. There is a new interest in them, a new attractiveness about them. Wrongs are forgotten. Antipathies are subdued. Jealousy and malice become repugnant. Pride and contempt give place to a longing to serve them. Divisions are healed. The effort to attain to inner unity with them by bestowing one's self upon them begets a new companionship, a new order of community life. Protestant individualism is not a divisive force but works toward the ultimate unification of the life of our whole humanity.

When one becomes aware that the voice that speaks within him and reveals his participation in the higher life is the utterance of the authoritative moral judgment, that is, the expression of the divine mind in the human consciousness, he also becomes aware that this comes not to him in independence of his relation to other men. At the same time he hears within himself the summons to communicate his secret to others. He becomes aware of the profound mutuality between man and man. In the end he sees that one mind is interpretative of all, one heart beating high with emotion in all, one will determining the will that is operative in all, in so far as this new experience of his is the experience of all. There rises then before him the possibility of finding that the priceless gift that has come to him, as he believes, from God, is an inheritance of the fruitage of the struggles of men like himself in the ages of the past. He is truly a child of the race. There rises before him also the prospect of being in his turn the mediator of like gifts to those who are yet to come after him.

4. *A further characteristic of Protestant individualism is its free self-devotion to an all-commanding, all-controlling, all-empowering personality.* This is implied in the foregoing but is worthy of more explicit statement here.

Early Protestants affirmed the authority of the Bible. It was because these writings disclosed the character of the higher personality. They held the perfect personality superior to the most perfect order. The Anabaptists had held allegiance to Jesus as the perfect Exemplar but this was quite unsatisfactory to Protestants generally. They saw in Christ one who gave himself to the bearing of the penalty of the violated divine law in self-substitution for

others and who thereby became the source of all the good they held or hoped for. Their theories of atonement were their attempts to justify their confidence in him as the real source of their rightness, though they gave their theory a legal twist. The theory itself is of much less account than the interest which the theory sought to serve. In other words, it was the actual participation on their part in the quality of life that manifested its glory on the cross and their confidence that thereby they had become sharers in the perfect life, that led them to frame a theory that seemed to show that their faith was warranted.

What really occurred, then, was this: Their reading of the New Testament combined with the impress which generation after generation of Christians had made upon their outlook on life to awaken their souls to the significance of the personality of the vicarious Sufferer. Their emotional nature reacted in a feeling of absolute dependence upon that Ideal Personality who had projected himself with such purifying power into human life. All the good that was in them they had received. All was of grace. They were as men who had been born over again to a higher life. They were the subjects of the action of another, who surely could not be less than God. It was this profound awareness of the blessedness of subjecting themselves in the entirety of their being to the will of the ideal Christ that enabled them to discard all those human contrivances which had that end in view, as profane attempts to divert men from Him who had given his very spirit to them. The life of Protestantism gathers about the personality of Jesus Christ and not about an institutional order. The growing apprehension

of the meaning of that Figure has operated with controlling power in the reinterpretation of our inherited ways of thinking on all subjects. This deeper appreciation of the meaning of that personality whom we call Jesus Christ, associated with the progress of the Protestant communities and their scientific knowledge, has produced within us the conviction that *salvation in the true Christian sense, means the progressive fulfillment of the inner potencies of our human spirit.* We shall presently refer to this subject more fully.

II. THE POWER OF THE PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN FAITH IS MANIFEST IN ITS DEVELOPING COMMUNITY LIFE.

The intense personalism of Protestantism seemed, to Roman Catholics, bound to create increasing division and strife, inasmuch as it encouraged every man to regard himself as a free interpreter of the divine mind and an organ of the divine will. Fostering a spirit of self-affirmation and of personal aggressiveness, would it not tend to set every man's hand against his neighbor? Would it not tend to encourage the selfish spirit that makes every other man and every institution a mere means to its own ends? Would it not tend to fill the world with anarchy? If so, the Protestant "salvation" must turn out to be that from which every man must pray devoutly to be saved. Fears like these were shared by not a few non-Catholics. The long and bloody wars that followed the Protestant outbreak, the civil and fratricidal strife that desolated the British Isles, France, Holland and many parts of Germany seemed to proclaim the new found freedom a freedom to destroy.

A parallel to the political strife and confusion was found in the religious dissensions. Variant interpretations of scripture and doctrinal disputes among Protestants multiplied. Dissent tended to break up the state-churches. Rival religious bodies steadily grew in numbers. These signs of a coming dissolution were accompanied by the assaults of new philosophies from within Protestantism upon the citadel of traditional orthodoxy.

Reflective minds began to seek a theory of life that would provide a way of safety from the dangers lurking in a self-assertive individualism. The Ethics of Baruch Spinoza, the Jew, displayed the vanity and futility of all our strifes by unfolding a pantheistic interpretation of existence. Individualism was annulled. All forms of being were modes of the one eternal Substance, God. He whose eyes have been opened to perceive the one Being in whom we all live will cease from the vain imaginings and struggles that fill the world with sorrow and pain, and he will be at peace. Thomas Hobbes, the Englishman, chose a different path to the same end. Holding that human nature is under the sway of selfish desire and that wars spring naturally from conflicting desires, he proposed in his Leviathan a scheme of government founded on the renunciation by all of their individual aims and the commitment of all authority to one sole absolute Ruler—a benevolent despotism. Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Frenchman, in his Contrat Sociale sought the same end by a different method. Instead of directly annulling the rights of the individual members of a political community he aimed rather to persuade all to use their franchise in establishing the authority of the General Will, the individual being thereby assured of the

better satisfaction of his needs than the exercise of his individual will in its separateness could possibly secure. Schopenhauer, the German, at a later date, developed his theory of the essentially evil character of all individual life and hoped, Buddha-like, for blessedness through the extinction of desire, the source of all evil.

These theories represent temporary reactions against the bold, confident spirit of the Protestant spirit, reactions which, if successful, could allay strife and put an end to warfare only at the cost of a retreat from the great tasks which life thrusts upon every man and at the cost of a renunciation of personality itself. We perceive the kinship of these views with the Catholic policy of suppressing individual initiative and also with the inherited Protestant inhibition of good works as a means of salvation on the ground that the human will is thoroughly depraved by inheritance from a fallen Adam. It is the remnant of this early Protestant inheritance from Catholicism that is still provocative of suspicion toward every new movement of thought that seems to threaten the stability of the faith of the fathers.

The Catholic system has as one of its foundation stones an attitude of suspicion and distrust toward the individual. Its doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin, while reminiscent of an unrealized ideal humanity, set the ideal in the past and accounted for the loss of it by the individual's affirmation of his own will. The orthodox Protestant retention of this view in a severe form has proved a handicap in the advance toward the ideal community life.

But now, after four centuries of Protestant life, it has become evident that the spirit of the newer faith is not

essentially divisive but communion-forming on a broad scale. Its true import is steadily becoming clearer. The older faith made the individual mainly recipient in regard to salvation, while the newer faith makes him mainly communicative. The older faith tended to the exclusion of his will as positively contributory toward the higher life, while the newer faith seeks to awaken his will to a higher activity. The older faith conceived grace mainly as *bestowed* on its possessor, while the newer faith conceives it mainly as *exercised* by him. The older faith pictured to the human imagination a heaven of rest in another world where no tasks and no toils would be imposed on the blessed, while the newer faith is repelled by the spirit of selfishness that was fostered by this older view, and aspires to the achievement of tasks ever increasing in their greatness, as the true ideal to be sought. We see that the true Protestant is not world-weary, or tired of life, or hesitant in accepting new responsibility, or timid in the presence of great demands upon him, but glories in them. Whereas of old it was said to be Christ's exclusive prerogative to be a vicarious sufferer for the sins of others, now it is the source of the highest joy to the believer to know that he may utterly share the "fellowship of his sufferings and be made comformable to his death." And this is itself an instance of the manner in which the newer faith has been at work steadily annulling the gulf between heaven and earth, between this world and the next, and making life here and life hereafter one in principle. In other words, it has been steadily turning from a conception of salvation that made it a specially devised plan for securing to men a mode of safe transition from this world to the

next, when one comes to die, to the conception that the entrance here and now into the higher life, the eternal life of God, is salvation. Thus it developes the life of the higher communion right in the midst of the common secular tasks of life and discards the Catholic view of the separateness of the life of the "religious." It places the priest and the layman on the same level and breaks down the artificial barrier between them, making them members of the same community, and on the same basis.

This communion-forming power is visibly at work in the growth of the free religious associations among Protestants. The free churches are the product of personal freedom of action. Protestant churches are not constituted by the imposition of an order from without, to which the human individual must submit in order to share in its grace, but they are constituted by the free mutual ministry of individuals. Were all the church organizations in the world to disappear today, new organizations, as truly fitted to their purpose, would be brought into being tomorrow by the free persons who seek to communicate the high worth of their own personality to their fellowmen. That is to say, the act of outer separation from the institutions of the older order is justified on the ground that this step was taken in pursuance of a fuller realization of the Christian communion. The basis of it was broader and deeper than that which it sought to displace. At the present time these free associations cover vast areas of the earth and embrace within their fellowship great multitudes of people of many races and languages. The free churches, with their foundation in the worth of the free man, are pointing the way to the richer unification of humanity the world over. The very

multiplication of religious denominations, an inevitable outcome of freedom, so often looked on as wholly evil, is now seen to have marked the path to a breadth of spirit, a mutual toleration, a sympathy and ministry heretofore unrealized.

This Protestant spirit of mutual trust and love is now affirming itself on an unparalleled scale in the constitution of a great multiplicity of benevolent institutions and enterprises stretching away beyond denominational lines, affecting all the walks of life and all enterprises, from the common school maintained by common consent from the public funds to the organizations that seek to infuse into nations and empires a spirit of world-brotherhood. These signalize the progress of the Christian salvation in the world of men, the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth.

III. THE NEWER PROTESTANT INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH EMBRACES A DEEPENING INSIGHT INTO THE MYSTERY OF MAN'S RELATION TO HIS UNIVERSE AND A RICHER FELLOWSHIP WITH IT.

We have pointed out that in a true Protestantism there is no spirit of world-flight. As it has gradually parted company with the Catholic doctrine of the fall of man from an earlier state of holiness, so also it has parted with the Catholic doctrine that the physical order is the seat of evil. The sense of kinship with nature has deeply permeated the Protestant mind. It has sought to possess itself of nature's secret, with no misgivings as to the outcome. The old rationalist protest against the traditional disparagement of the natural was well grounded.

To tell the story of the way in which the Protestant faith has become aware of its inherent character in this regard is to trace the onward march of modern science. Faith in God and distrust of the world are unhappy companions in the same bosom. As man has arrived at a knowledge of his true selfhood through a fellowship with God, so also has it been with respect to his fellowship with the world. As he succeeds in persuading Nature to divulge her secret to him, he uncovers his own hidden personality. His progressive discovery of the constitution of the universe is so far forth a self-discovery.

To part company with those who disparage the world of nature is to part company presently with those who make the Christian faith to repose on miracles in the sense of an interference with nature from without. At first, Protestant men of science were rather startled at the inferences naturally drawn from their own discoveries and would fain have set apart a separate realm for their religious faith and for the gift of salvation, regarded as an extraneous deliverance. For they had inherited the view that it was a process temporarily interpolated into the natural course of human affairs. This would seem to demand an extraneous Deity from whom the Saviour came into this world and to whom he went back again that we might also ascend by non-natural means. More and more the modern man has come to feel that all worlds constitute one universe, the constitution of the many worlds is the same everywhere, and more and more he feels that the constitution of man, a denizen of the universe, must be such as makes him at home in it.

In this way the entire field of human knowledge is being remapped with a breadth of survey and minute-

ness of detail far beyond the farthest stretch of the imagination of our fathers. The story of origins is being retold with particular care. The history of human life is being worked out with supreme regard for fact and independently of the earlier orthodox doctrine. It is found that the story of human origins is but a chapter in the story of life. But life itself is so bound up with inanimate existence that the search for some universal principle immanent in all being is prosecuted by science—at this point become philosophy—with an ardor that springs from the feeling that the well-being of all is at stake. There can be good in store for men only if the universe itself is good.

This scientific pursuit has invested the story of religion with a deep interest. Religion appears as a salient feature of the whole of human life. No longer can it be viewed as a product of priestly invention, as the older rationalists once said, but it is seen to be itself an implicit interpretation of life in such a universe as ours. It is no abnormality in man. But while this annuls the objections of the older rationalism it involves a very thoroughgoing reinterpretation of the Christian religion. This new interpretation is suggested by the Protestant faith.

The assurance of moral betterment, then, issues in a new attitude toward the material world. In place of a shrinking terror in the presence of the mysterious powers of the universe there arises a spirit of enterprise worldward. World-flight, as has been said, is no Protestant virtue. The world is ours to know and to possess. Its secrets are to be unveiled to our minds and its forces to be appropriated to our purposes. It invites us to make its real wealth our own. The Protestant Christian faith

is economically fertile. It was not as man of science nor as philosopher, but as an exponent of Christian faith that Paul uttered the great words: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." This is also the true Protestant faith. The conquest of moral evil within the bosom carries with it the power to conquer the forces of nature and make them ministrant to a universal human good. The moral pessimism of Catholicism in the face of nature has given place in Protestantism to a moral optimism. As God is no longer set over against man, as the divine is no longer the anti-human or the unhuman, so also is God no longer set over against the world as spirit against matter. Physical being is no longer fallen being. The physical order is a harmony and not a discord. It is vibrant with the song of divine goodness. It invites us truly to fellowship with God and fellowship with men. Thus the impulse to social betterment and the impulse to scientific achievement spring alike from the experience of moral conversion on the part of the individual.

If to multitudes of primitive Christians salvation was viewed as deliverance from the power of the evil demons to be completed at the time of the great physical cataclysm and the bodily advent of the Messiah from the skies; if to the Graeco-oriental of a later date it was identical with a transmutation of the corruptible human nature into the likeness of the incorruptible divine nature through the ministration of the divine mysteries; if to the Roman Catholic of a still later date and of another race it was deliverance from the fires of purgatory and hell through the use of sacraments in priestly hands; and if, finally, to the early Protestant it was mainly a

present acquittal before the bar of God through the substitutionary sufferings of Christ and the faith of the believer; to the modern Protestant it is the bringing of the man into such a fellowship with God as gives him a self-mastery and a self-devotion to the highest end of life. It is the entrance into an experience of conscious unity of life with one's fellowmen, a participation in the ministry of a universal good. It is to be endowed with that spirit of enterprise that enables him to turn the forces of the material world toward their true end, to make them angels of mercy sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation. This newer interpretation we shall proceed to unfold more explicitly in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER VII

THE BASIC AFFIRMATION.

The preceding discussions have steadily led us in the direction of finding our standard for the interpretation of the Christian salvation within the communion of the Protestant faith. But we have seen that its first expositors' insight into the meaning of that faith was very imperfect, and naturally so. Moreover, they were directed by the exigencies of religious controversy and of political and economic strife to clothe their interpretations in the customary garb of the times. Protestants, generally, had a very imperfect apprehension of the meaning of their Protestantism. But with the passing of four centuries of tremendous activity they have *lived out* the Protestant life in a fulness far greater than was possible for its first representatives and they have gradually *outlived* much of the ritual, the church order and the creedal affirmations of the early days. Just as the genius of the human mind comes to fuller light in the adult than it can possibly do in the child, so also the genius of the Protestant faith has come far more clearly to consciousness in our day than was possible for it to do four centuries ago. The summary we have given, in preceding chapters, of the principal stages of the Christian life, as these come to culmination in modern Protestantism, will now be our guide in our formulation of the basis of that life.

We made, we trust, a further discovery, to wit, that the Christian hope of salvation, as that comes to enriched

fulfilment in Protestantism, stands in no extraneous relation to those hopes that everywhere nerve mankind continually onward to new endeavors for betterment. The Christian hope of salvation *is* the universal human hope, purified, clarified, magnified into ever grander power. By its light we read back into past generations and ages the great persistent affirmations of the meaning of human life everywhere. It is not so much the exclusiveness as it is the inclusiveness of the Christian faith that impresses us today. In its high worth we find a higher scale of values for mankind generally. Thus are we led onward to the affirmation that is basic to all human utterances of hope in a Better in store for mankind. This basic affirmation is the declaration of *the supreme worth of personality—its ultimate supremacy in the universe.*

In our exposition of this position we shall first present it apart from the specifically Christian experience and afterwards connect it generally with the Christian idea of salvation.

I. THE ADVENT OF PERSONALITY.

At some time relatively early in the life of every human child there springs into action within him a mysterious power without which he could not be called truly human. Not until long after others have observed in the child the action of this inner potency does the child himself become aware of its presence. I refer to what we may call the sense of selfhood, to a thinking in which the self is not only implicated but distinctly in mind, to that which is or becomes the eternal I AM of the Man.

This distinctively human endowment challenges today more insistently than at any time in the past the ability of the thinker to explain it.

This challenge was in the mind of Alfred Tennyson when he wrote the following stanzas in his *In Memoriam:*

> The baby new to earth and sky,
> What time his tender palm is prest
> Against the circle of the breast,
> Has never thought that "This is I."
>
> But as he grows he gathers much,
> And learns the use of "I" and "Me,"
> And finds, "I am not what I see,
> And other than the things I touch."
>
> So rounds he to a separate mind
> From which clear memory may begin,
> As through the frame that shuts him in
> His isolation grows defined.

His isolation! There lies the key to all the tragedies and triumphs that may await him.

1. *When does personality come to the birth?* The question has not been clearly answered. If personality is at last self-awareness, then psychologists have not succeeded in discovering the most rudimentary beginnings of this self-awareness or in tracing with sure step the course of its development. Its presence is not to be detected with certainty in the infant, for no regular or consistent mode or power of expression is acquired by it for a time. We cannot decide with certainty whether the little child's bodily activities, which seem to the onlooker to be purely involuntary muscular effects of unconscious nervous

action, arouse its mentality to work or whether there may be in the child movements of will that produce muscular movements as they do in the case of the man. Memory can give but little help here. For it carries us back only to a comparatively late date in our child life. No man remembers when he began to think or to be aware of himself as separate in some sense from others. All the inferences which we may obtain on this point by observing instances of unconscious nervous action in people or by probing our own mature intelligence are very precarious. The outcome is likely to be a confirmation of the opinions we bring to the study rather than an increase of real knowledge. But if the conditions or the time of the original appearing of self-consciousness in the life of the individual cannot be found, it matters little. That the advent of self-consciousness, if it has a birth-hour, should remain forever a mystery only indicates that in this field as in all others, there is a limit beyond which our search cannot be carried.

It is clear, however, that what may seem at first mere physical cravings of the child soon take on a definiteness of desire and action that evince the working in him of some order of intelligence. He soon comes to exhibit resentment or anger—or that which would be called such in the adult—when his cravings go unheeded. Parents early find it is necessary to place him under discipline, that is, they must treat him, at any rate, as if he were already incipient personality. Indeed, we may say that the secret of the loving care that is bestowed on the infant member of the household lies in the common expectation that he is destined to become fully personal. When that day arrives the event may prove very start-

ling to the parents. Both he and they must learn the difficult lesson how to adjust themselves to the new situation—"his isolation." The discovery that there are private chambers in the child's nature into which they cannot penetrate begets unutterable anxieties in the parent breast (one wonders whether this may be true of a Heavenly Father!). To realize that he has the right to choose his own way in the world and by degrees to determine his own destiny brings to the parents fears and longings too deep for utterance. The child at length becomes his own master as truly as they.

We may safely affirm, therefore, that, although for a period of time, varying in its length in different cases, we can perceive no immediate self-awareness in a young child, yet that time will not be greatly prolonged if his life be normal. And this power, once acquired, will endure as long as humanity. The point of chief importance in this matter of the nature of personality is not so much our ability to mark the hour of its birth or even to trace its course onward, as it is to analyze and interpret its action in the mature man. Not while it is still in the blade but when it has become the full corn in the ear do we become acquainted with the true character of anything. The potentialities of the child are revealed in the man.

2. *Personality is not the name of a mere sum of experiences.* Probably we are all somewhat familiar with the efforts of a certain group of investigators who, in the name of a purely empirical psychology, read personality out of existence except as the name for a sum of psychic events. This group hold that knowledge is nothing more than a concatenation or succession of these occurrences. The whole is called consciousness. "This string of ex-

periences," say they, "requires for its explanation nothing beyond the experiences themselves or a similar string of antecedent inner events. They simply *are*. These mere successions of feelings or ideas or volitions that rise in our consciousness somehow manage to get themselves into groups and obtain separate names. These groups of experiences are all that we refer to when we speak of persons. All, therefore, that we can be said to have in mind when we speak of this or that self or person is a collection of experiences that stay strung together or unified in some way long enough to bear fittingly a distinct name." Even the marvellous working of memory, they hold, is not necessarily anything more than one experience or group of experiences which may be said to be aware of another experience or group of experiences —whatever that may mean!

A remark or two may be made in reply. The degree of plausibility that may attach to the above views rests clearly on the assumption that there really is a succession of single feelings or ideas or volitions each of which is detachable from the others. But it is not possible to point to any such experiences as a matter of fact. Our life is not made up of staccato notes. Every so-called single experience turns out under examination to have a definite character due to the relation it sustains in our minds to many other occurrences which in their entirety make up the field of experience. It is true that we may temporarily single out some inner event and separate it from the rest for the purposes of study, but we are aware at that moment that it still belongs to the whole body of experiences and that apart from them no character whatsoever could be assigned to it. We can speak intelligently

of different experiences only because they all fall within the circle of one whole experience. But those who hold to the views above referred to are utterly unable to account for this inclusive experience, since to speak of experiences "somehow" getting themselves collected into groups is to abandon altogether the attempt to obtain a scientific view of experience.

In the next place, it is interesting to observe that those very writers who say that we are not required to look beyond the mere succession of feelings or ideas or volitions to a person who has these experiences, are able to save themselves from uttering a meaningless jargon only by constantly introducing the *personal pronouns*. Surely, in consistency, these pronouns ought to have been dispensed with. Thus they tacitly confess that they are compelled to take for granted that reality which they have seemingly argued out of existence. This is more than a mere habit of speech. It is not the "poverty of language" but the character of our conscious life that compels them to fall back upon the common habit of speech. That is to say that, were it not for the organizing activity of this self-conscious being, the "string of experiences" would be snuffed out and be lost before the others could appear. Consequently all *interest* in things would disappear. Of actual knowledge or action there would be none, because the knower and actor would be nonexistent.

An attempt has been made to take the cutting edge off this argument by saying substantially in reply: "Granted this self-consciousness of which you speak, is it not after all just one of the happenings that we call our experiences? That is to say, when I speak or think of my own

self or other selves there is always, besides the feelings now present and the remembrance of feelings past, a picture of a distinctly physical being with all those temporary and external features that belong to any object perceived by the senses or held in the memory. So that our real self of which we can speak intelligently to one another is just one of our passing experiences. In course of time, like everything else, it changes and passes away. This collection of experiences has nothing but a temporary persistence in our thoughts and cannot be allowed any value in itself."

And to this, again, it is to be answered briefly: Even if it be true that every picture of our real self which we may present to our own or another's mind contains the temporary features claimed for it, this does not invalidate our position in any degree. No one denies that our self-consciousness is always connected with the passing concrete facts of life and that apart from them its action would not be what it is. But we claim that all these facts occur as facts for us by virtue of the action of a principle that holds them together and makes them its own. The world of sight and sound and touch is a real world to us because of the action of a real self whose world it is. We are not speaking of a self that "somehow" exists in and by itself without relation to the facts of our sense-life but of a self that never can be put in the same class with those facts, because they occur for it and not it for them. The point is: *my experiences are because I am.* This everlasting I AM stands. My experiences come and go, but I am always in the midst of them and implicated in their coming and going. Human consciousness is *self*-consciousness. It is the self *conscious.*

3. The significance of the self is augmented when we recognize that *there is a community of selves.* Of course, it is not meant here to say that we ever have a distinct perception or consciousness of the self apart from all else but that in all feeling, thinking and willing I, who am aware of these, am not merely aware that there *is* a feeling, a thought, a will to be considered but that in each case it is known as *mine.* I am the subject—they are in relation to me. And I am the agent—they proceed from me. To other persons they are expressions of me and material for their interpretation of me. I am not a mere unknowable *somewhat,* logically presupposed in these things. The truth is, I am aware of myself in being aware of any of these forms of action and passion. Without *me* they lose their meaning. The "isolation" of which the poet spoke, does not describe the whole truth of selfhood. The "thou" and the "he" are as inevitable in consciousness as the "I." While we cannot go into this great subject at length a few words may be said here.

The child's act of distinguishing himself from others is much more than a reference to his physical separateness, the exclusive space his body occupies or his exercise of the organs of his body in their unity. The distinction becomes much more inward than outward for him. Whatever may be the process by which it comes about, the time certainly arrives when he finds other selves with each of whom he enjoys a reciprocity of experiences and to whom he attributes an inner constitution of the same kind as his own. That is, he sees or thinks he sees in their acts the same feelings or thoughts as he has under the same conditions. Indeed, it may well be that he discovers the selfhood of others before he distinctly reflects

upon his own or even knows his own. Conscious selfhood seems fairly to be imparted from one to another. "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and (thereby) man became a living soul." The lower personality is an impartation from the higher. We are never altogether alone in the inmost chamber of our mind. Nay, we cannot bear the thought of being alone. A life without some degree of conscious fellowship with other lives would not be a human life. Fellowship is not less evidently a fact in human life than its distinctness. The "I" of consciousness is never found without the "thou" and the "he," and thence the "we" and the "they" of experience become an indispensable fact. The experience of fellowship is coincident with self-consciousness as far as our knowledge of the matter goes. There is a constant longing also for the fellowship with others, which is inappeasable except by its fulfillment.

From these two cardinal affirmations, namely, of selfhood and of a community of selves, our human life gets its highest meaning. Alone, I should have no character, be neither good nor bad, have no aim and, so far as we can tell, have no knowledge. Not a deed of mine and not a movement of my thought can be contemplated by me with reference to its significance and worth unless its bearing upon others like myself be taken into account. Nor could the physical world around me have for me the inspiration or terror which it unquestionably has did I not find that it exists for another also and speaks to him as it does to me. In the end we all find ourselves treating that world as a medium of our fellowship with one another and as an instrument of our common purposes. Thus the very universe in which each one of us seems

to fill so infinitesimal a place may well be chiefly regarded as the sphere for the realization of a human life of fellowship.

4. *Perchance we shall be met at this point by a challenge: "Let personality, true selfhood, be defined." If we reply that personality strictly speaking, cannot be defined, this is by no means derogatory to the claim we are making for personality.* Definition has its essential place in the formulation of ideas. But there is a limit both to the possibility and to the uses of definition. The complex may be defined in terms of its more simple constituents, or the less understood by the better understood, or the less meaningful by the more meaningful. But personality presents a barrier to definition, not because its place in the context of life is obscure but because it is that out of which all else that is known to us obtains meaning. All definition is *for* the self-consciousness but there can be no definition *of* the self-consciousness, since it is self-consciousness that defines. If, therefore, the term definition be used in the strict sense, personality is indefinable. It is the ultimate in our search for the source of all feeling, knowledge or action. Personality is that which is self-conscious in all the forms of our consciousness. Personality, self-consciousness is and apart from it we cannot say that any thing else exists.

Summing up this portion of our discussion, we say: We are more than the sum of our experiences. They are for us but they are not we. That which we call ourself is never a mere product of outer forces. We are never purely passive. We are never the sum of the effects of activities beyond us. Even in our so-called passive experiences we are truly active. So to say, we make even our

own feelings and that, by the way, is the reason why we accept responsibility for them. All else is subordinate and tributary. But personality is never independent of its own kind. It is always in fellowship, it lives in and with other personalities. It has the prerogative of saying, "I am myself and am distinct from all things." But it has also the prerogative of saying, "I am more than my own self. For I find myself in others and them in me. I am a member of a fellowship of personalities." Here is the basis of all religion. Salvation is the realization of this fellowship.

II. THE FULFILMENT OF PERSONALITY

The foregoing statements are not intended to convey the idea that any man has become fully or wholly personal. If we may say, in algebraic fashion, that personality is the coefficient that gives meaning and worth to everything with which we have to do, we are compelled to acknowledge in the presence of the unmeaning things and the errors, the miscarriages and the wrongs, the ugliness and the sins which constantly confront us, that we are all very imperfectly personal. Our feeling, our thinking, our willing never come perfectly under our own guidance and control. Here is the source of all the troubles and anxieties of our life, its dangers and terrors, its miscarriages and failures. The supremacy of personality never becomes a proven fact. It always remains a faith and a hope. Nevertheless it is for the sake of the realization of this faith and hope that we are content to live at all.

Let us hope that we have succeeded in making some progress in our aim to indicate the significance of all our

human efforts in any direction whatsoever. We shall now attempt to present in outline the consequences of this method of interpretation. The limits of our space compel us to make our statements in somewhat dogmatic fashion.

1. *The achievements of science are modes in which our personality affirms its right and its power to conquer the universe for itself, that is, to make the universe a means of self-fulfilment.* Natural science is often spoken of as a purely objective study of the facts accessible to our senses and of the laws that govern these facts. In such a pursuit all personal, private interest is said to be necessarily excluded. All facts are to be brought within a single unexceptional system or order that will stand in its own right independently of the likes or dislikes, the hopes and fears of the discoverer. It aims and strives unceasingly to find one whole world that embraces all facts and forces within itself, even though it must confess that no such world has yet been fully discovered. The man of science is supposed to risk vitiating the processes of his investigations if he makes any concessions to human preferences while collecting his data and drawing his conclusions. But this limitation which he prescribes for himself is only temporarily enforced after all. The man of science does not cease to be a human being. The truth of the matter is that, in order to secure accuracy, he must avoid the confusion and distraction of mind that might arise from the effort to keep the whole field of knowledge and the final purpose of knowledge before him. So he limits for the time being the area of his investigations and leaves the ultimate problems to the philosopher. Each student of science moves freely with-

in his chosen field and seeks to set aside the factors that do not bear directly on his special problem. But all the while he knows, or may know, quite well that both the methods he follows and the results he obtains are finally to be subjected to two great tests: First, he must face the necessity of bringing his discoveries into relation to discoveries made in other fields, so that these may be united with his own in a single rational system. Secondly, he must keep in mind that his results are to be placed in the end at the disposal of men, as a means to their good. "What is the final meaning of it all?" and, "Of what use is it all?" are questions that he must ultimately face. Science must vindicate itself both logically and practically. If it fails in either respect, it fails as science.

The foregoing statement is equivalent to saying that in science there is a striving to make personality dominant in the universe. The very modes of thought and speech in which men of science seek to describe the kind of world they are discovering have been built up through long and patient effort on the part of human thinkers and were not given to us directly as "innate ideas." Our very modes of thinking are achievements of the personal spirit as it pushes onward toward its goal. When, for example, we speak of the "action" of certain objects perceived by us we are using the language of metaphor, that is, we are transferring to that which is without us the characteristics of that which is within us. The "influences" or "changes" through which these objects pass are real to us, indeed, but *to them* they are no influences or changes. By likening these to the changes effected by our own will we transfer to them by way of figure the kinds of activity that we ourselves consciously perform.

Action is a matter of *will* and, in the end, nothing but acts of will can be dignified with the name of action. The same is true of our habit of referring to "force" or "energy" as present in the world. In no other way it seems, can we hope to make this outer world intelligible. Similarly, again, the "laws of nature" of which we speak so commonly, have meaning for us because the personal spirit prescribes for itself habits of action and seeks to give them a constancy that allows no place for arbitrariness or caprice. But in a world that was irregular, there would be no possibility of carrying into effect those laws which it ordains for itself. It is the self-directive activity of our spirits that lies behind this tendency to find laws in nature. There is no "law," no "ought," no obligation in nature apart from personality.

Science, then, is an attempt to place the stamp of the human mind upon the universe. It seeks to extend the sway of our spirit over all things. The secret of its exploratory determination lies in its unconquerable faith, to wit, the prophetic expectation that the ultimate meaning of the universe will come to light through its ministry to the inherent powers of our personality. Confirmation of this interpretation of the scientific movement comes to hand almost daily. Powers of nature that at one time filled the minds of men only with dumb wonder or helpless terror have been harnessed to work in our human interest and now minister to the comfort of our homes and the joys of our firesides. The paradox of modern scientific discovery lies in the fact that while it has disclosed to the modern man a universe whose vastness quickly outstretches the capacity of our intelligence even to conceive, the ancient terror of its mysterious forces

has given place to a buoyant assurance that these are our friends and helpers. The world was made for us and not we for the world.

Naturally enough, each man's world seems to reflect his own character. The secret of our seeing it, as we do, each for himself, lies in our proneness to read its meaning in terms of our inmost life. How often we have discovered that the incongruities, the maladjustments, the strifes and wrongs of the physical universe, as we see it, are but reflections of the turbulency of our own nature! So long as we are not what we ought to be or would be, so long as we are in conflict with ourselves, the world will seem to aggravate our trouble. For it will constantly suggest new sources of conflict and new prospects of failure. On the other hand, with each new spiritual conquest, with the increase of the feeling of inner harmony and with the certainty of spiritual progress to come, we are enabled to perceive that the world is full of beauty and goodness and that it is ever opening to us new avenues to the higher life. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

2. Did space but permit we might go on to show that *the aim of formal logic, of art and of ethics is of the same character*. When the logician sets forth his world of abstract thought he is expounding the methods of spiritual progress to which every man must adhere if he is to be saved from error in any mental enterprise whatsoever. When the artist paints the picture, carves the figure, writes the poem or sings his song, he too is transferring to seemingly non-human, unfeeling, dead matter the

dearest and sweetest, the holiest and mightiest emotions of the personal spirit. Nature finds and knows herself only in the actions of her destined Master.

And when we turn to the world of moral action, the world created by the free initiative of the personal will, we see that the systems of law and justice found among all tribes and peoples, great or small, find their meaning and their right in the fact that they attempt to set forth the manner in which a human personality may attain to its highest good. It will be found that the laws of this moral world which men have created or found for themselves always refer in some way to the relations between our personality and the world that environs it. They tell why it is that we must subdue that external world and make it servant to our highest will.

This inner conviction of man's superiority to the mightiest facts and forces of the material universe is well voiced in the poem (in "A Canadian Twilight") written by the youthful Bernard Trotter entitled,

ALTARS

Ye barren peaks, so mightily outlined
In naked rock against the viewless sky,
Your rugged grandeur mocks my human pride,
And rouses it to passionate reply.

Ye scorn the foot that treads your pathless ways,
The voice that breaks your primal solitudes,
Yea, e'en the eye that views your serried heights,
The ear that hears your cannon interludes.

Yet know that when your music-making brooks
Have buried you beneath the conquering sea,
And mingled heart of stone with oozy mud,
The topmost summit with the level lea,

This ear shall hear the deathless song of life,
This eye shall see beyond the utmost skies,
This voice shall sing soul-music, and this foot
Shall tread the love-lit paths of paradise.

Should I, then, born immortal, bow to you,
Who are but transient mounds of earthly clod?
O glorious height—I kneel in humble awe
To worship at the altars of my God.

3. *Personality comes to its fulfilment in and through the community of persons.* Perhaps the most of us first make the discovery that we hold this community relation when we find that the independent exercise of our will is vetoed, that is, when another will asserts itself over against ours. When the child finds himself so placed that a higher will than his own is in control of him he has learned his first lesson in morality. That is, he finds that he has to curb and discipline his powers so as to exercise them in a direction prescribed by a higher personal will. There must then be an adjustment of the two wills in relation to one another. With all their difference, the two must perform an act in common. From the moment that they come together both find that they seek a common good. The adjustment becomes mutual. The will of the very infant is not to be wholly subdued or crushed by another's, not even by its parents' will. Its will is rather to be strength-

ened continually by encouraging it to bring its fitful acts into harmony with some single purpose that is common to both, which the child must learn to inaugurate from within. Not the united wills of a nation of people, or even of the whole world, are to be placed in absolute control of the will of an individual. Even when we, so to say, overthrow his will, we mean that the veto which we oppose to his immediate act does itself present the true interpretation of his will, if it were normally unfolded. And when, oppositely, the martyr willingly lays down his life it is with the conviction that, when the community that seeks to destroy him comes to itself, it will find that he has anticipated a moral advance it was destined to make. His very death, he believes, will effectuate his will in them some day. We see, then, that a mere individual could not be moral. For morality is constituted by the will to achieve the common good.

A new insight is herewith obtained into our human relation to the material world in the midst of which we have our life. We have already pointed out that the world as viewed by us is instrumental to personality. But this is not to say that a personality comes to his true selfhood simply by appropriating the facts and forces in the material world as a means of satisfying his physical craving or in the way of guarding his physical safety as an individual. The supremely significant thing about the material world is the use that can be made of it as a medium by which men may come ever increasingly into communion with one another in purpose and practice. And the higher value of the marvellous mechanical inventions of our time lies in the fact that they are making the forces of the material world with astonishing rapidity

instrumental to fuller human fellowship, a bond of the common life. The world is a ministrant to the communion of men with one another in the fuller personal life.

Here we gain the clue to the discovery also of the higher personality. When one is found who bestows the wealth of his personality without stint upon all men, when he makes himself a means to their good by making his own good theirs, and when he seeks to make all things a medium for transferring his own self-consciousness to them, his is the personality that achieves for itself the highest place. He raises others to his own high level when he reproduces in them the same high estimate which he has of himself and thereby makes them capable of the same high service as himself. This power of self-identification with others in order that they may become participant in the inner power of one's own being is what we mean by saviourhood. To verify this affirmation we have but to recall how the members of great human communities have been content to see their history epitomized in the lives of their self-sacrificing heroes and heroines.

III. THE CHRISTIAN HOPE OF SALVATION AS IT PRESENTS ITSELF TO THE HEART OF ONE WHO STANDS IN A SYMPATHETIC RELATION TO THE GREAT MOVEMENTS OF PROTESTANT LIFE IN OUR TIMES.

1. *The Christian faith affirms as its basic conviction the ultimate realization of the supreme worth of the personal.* It utters itself most freely, not in the language of a philosophy of matter or spirit but in the language expressive of our conscious personal relations to one another. The mutual love and trust that founds the home, the tender-

ness of parents and the responsive confidence of their children, the mutual affection and help of brothers and sisters, the loyalty of friend to friend—these convey most readily to the Christian heart the relations of the human with the divine. GOD IS PERSONALITY and he who knows the relations of one person with another need count himself no stranger to the life of the Most High. And the power that binds the votaries of this religion together is not found in a fixed law of conduct or body of doctrines but in a Personality, a Christ, in whom every seeking soul may find the answer to its longings. And as for the order, the institutions through which the higher personal life is initiated, what are they but the changing forms in which Christians have sought to promote the familiarity and interest in one another through which they become more fully aware of the presence of One who is all in all. These personal associations and these alone, in the end, are the means of salvation.

Accordingly, the Christian faith idealizes the human personality wherever found. Its attitude toward humanity is ever hopeful, "never despairing" of raising every man to the higher life. Hence the Christian gives himself to the missionary endeavor unceasingly.

2. *Salvation, as a change of state, can be found only in the inner life of the person, not in anything external to it.* It pertains not to one's circumstances but to the self-setting of life. The Christian pictures of heaven and hell are dramatizations of the soul-quality of people. Salvation is not something to be given to one or taken away again. The recipient is never purely recipient but is himself active in the creation of that state. That which comes through communication from another is at the

same time a personal attainment. It is no longer necessary for us to deny the freedom of the human will, like the early Protestant theologians, in order to magnify the grace of God as against the "good works" of the Catholics. Nor is it necessary to follow the Catholic distinction between God's part and man's part in the work of salvation. For in the free out-going of the human will toward its chosen end the divine grace itself is savingly at work. Salvation is communion with God.

Strictly speaking, salvation is not a "state" at all. A static condition would be an evil to personality, which is essentially active. Personal action is the only force we know at first hand. Progress is essential to well-being. Salvation is found in the unfolding of an ever-higher self-consciousness, in the attainment of an ever-worthier personal life and this can come to us in no other way than by the impartation to us of the dynamic of another personality.

3. *While the idea of salvation as commonly understood is specifically a religious idea, it is not to be regarded as, for that reason, essentially different from any other advance that may take place toward the better in our spiritual life.* When there is a growth in intelligence, or acquisition of a greater measure of control over the forces of nature or our personal impulses, or such a development of the aesthetic quality of our nature as brings us into a higher appreciation of the beauties and wonders of the universe, or an improvement of economic conditions or the social environment, or a higher appreciation of the value of truth and justice, or a kindlier view generally of other persons—all these are of the nature of salvation, for in them all the human personality comes to the realization of a higher

value in itself. It is not thereby decided which of these types of betterment is primary and fundamental and which derivative and secondary, but we may be assured that any doctrine of salvation that disparages the value of any one of these is defective. Whether there be a distinctively Christian salvation or not depends on whether there comes, in the state of mind that may be called distinctively Christian, a distinct increment to our personal worth, something that gives to life a value that is not found outside the Christian realm, whether, that is, the Christian experience is inclusive of all true benefits to men in their ultimate significance. The statement here offered in brief will receive further expansion in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER VIII

SIN AND FORGIVENESS

The normal course of human life is through conflict, a conflict of community with community, of individual with individual and of the man with himself. Even in the midst of hearty cooperation among men there is always some divergence of purpose, some measure of disharmony. Conflict reaches its highest intensity and appears in its most awful form when nation is set against nation in military combat. But the peace that brings a war to its close is always a prelude to the disclosure of further difference, tension, and later conflict of some kind. All conflict issues from the opposition between cherished ideals. Whenever two communities are brought into contact a conflict of ideals is inevitable. For there is in humanity an irrevocable impulse toward the formation of one all-embracing community and the effort to accomplish this end is always associated with the emergence of differences needing reconciliation. The basis of any true union is found in the acceptance of a common ideal. The conflicting ideals of communities reflect, and in turn are reflected by, the conflicts between individuals and, again, by the conflicts that occur in the bosom of the man.

I. THE MEANING OF SIN

It is from the point of view indicated we can hope to understand the Christian conviction of sin and the assurance of forgiveness.

1. In keeping with our method of interpretation in the discussion of other topics, here again *we begin with the self-consciousness, the inner self-judgment of the man.* That is, in a word, the Christian view of sin in general is such a view as the Christian may have of his own sin. He reflects his own self-judgment out upon the world of men and sees everywhere, in fact or in potency, the same kind of conflict as he finds in himself. Here we take it for granted that there is a Christian self-judgment, differing from that of the Jew, or the Mohammedan, or the Buddhist, and we shall see that this arises from the action within him of a distinctive ideal to whose commanding voice he cannot say nay. This ideal is the source of both his highest happiness and his deepest woe. The self-conviction of sin is the obverse side of the acceptance of the higher ideal, that is, of the act of entering upon the pursuit of the better life.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to a familiar concrete instance, in the Gospel story of Simon Peter's denial of his Master. We note, first of all, the Master's prediction of the faithless act and Peter's instant horror of recoil at the prospect, with his hearty and emphatic asseveration of loyalty. Then follow the Master's arrest, Peter's attempt to defend him, and his self-exposure to danger by following his Beloved right into the court-room. Then come the thrice-repeated accusation that he is a companion of the Galilean and the thrice-repeated denial that he even knew the man. In a moment his eyes and the Master's meet and his accusing conscience drives him from the room in an agony of tears.

The situation depicted in the Gospels is entirely natural. It exhibits the deep conflict of ideals which every

Christian experiences at times. On the one side was the action of the native instinct of self-preservation, a wholesome and worthful motive in us all. It was reinforced at the time by the spectacle he was witnessing and soon became dominant. There was the Innocent, the Lord, the Blessed One dragged before a heartless and cruel tribunal that was committed beforehand to pronounce upon him the sentence of death. Why should he himself become another victim to their wicked perversion of right and justice? Why should he assist a jealous and blood-thirsty hierarchy in their determination to carry out their bad desire to destroy their foes? It is well to live. It is good to seek to save one's life. Neither the Jews of that time nor the people of any other time have been ready to condemn a man for telling a falsehood to save his life when he is exposed to danger at the hands of lying, wicked enemies. Peter's tears are not to be taken directly as a sign of sorrow because of having told a falsehood to save his life but because of his conscious falsity to his new-found Ideal. I do not mean to say that he reflected consciously along the lines here indicated, for in such a fearful moment one's mind works with lightning-like rapidity and leaps to conclusions by means that only reflective thought can trace, but the situation was as I have described.

Over against the influences I have mentioned there were impulses of a contrary nature working in Peter's mind, though very dimly at the instant. There was his genuine love for his Master and his determination never to forsake him. There was his sympathy for the accused and the desire to be near to help, if possible, in that terrible hour. There was the daring devotion that led him right into the scene of danger for love's sake. The glance

of the Master's eye, without a word, or sign, or look of warning or distrust, so far as we can tell, flung back into Peter's mind the sense of the worth of Jesus to him. The hours and days and months spent with Jesus, the tender mutual confidence between them, the new standards of life, the new aspirations, the new hopes he had gained of the coming in of the kingdom of goodness and purity and peace—with the Master's glance it all flashed back into the heart of Peter. How mean and low all self-seeking became in Jesus' presence! How vile and worthless so many things that once seemed well worth the having! How sinful the very best in one's past was seen to be, in the presence of such as He! How repulsive the pride that lurked in his own confident professions of loyalty! How quickly, in the mind of such a one, does the pang of bitter regret take the place of the satisfaction and self-congratulation with which a successful evasion would have filled his mind but for the contact with that Higher Spirit! What might have seemed meritorious to one who had never come under the mastership of the new Ideal is turned into demerit in the presence of the demands of this law of the higher life. Thus must it ever be. He who conveys to men's hearts the power of a worthier purpose becomes by that very achievement the author in them of a deeper and more acute sense of sin.

2. This is how it comes about that *the Christian has a constant awareness of sin within.* For the Christian faith comes to men not as a formally complete and final law, not as a fixed standard of conduct, but as a quality of life that cannot perish. The standard rises to a new and higher level with every new spiritual advance the Christian makes. By comparison with the new the old is sin, and

every time he follows the old rather than the new he commits an act of sin. There is no man who feels within him both the longing for the better life and the working of the propensities and habits which have been developed under the power of the older life but is aware of the will to evil within. If the Christian ideal of life is identical with Jesus Christ and if it has been propagated from him out into the Christian world, then it is true that his very gift of a saving ideal contains within itself the gift also of a personal conviction of sin. One cannot be Savior without becoming Judge.[1]

It is evident, therefore, that a Christian consciousness of sin does not precede the exercise of Christian faith in the soul but accompanies it and is inseparable from it. Consequently, in the Christian message there is no effort made to produce a consciousness of sin apart from the exercise of saving faith or as a preparation for it but only such a consciousness of sin as can be an element in this faith. The Christian faith is not expressed in the terms of a law that kills but in the terms of a law that gives life. The sense of sin has no value in itself. The habit of morbid reflection on one's sins which has been cultivated in some quarters is unchristian and, so far from leading to a genuine humility of spirit, tends to hypocrisy.

It is also evident that the Christian consciousness of sin has not in it the quality of hopelessness but just the reverse. To say, "I am a sinner," is truly to say that I have within me a better self that repudiates the old self—that, to use the words of Paul, I have "put off the old man and have put on the new man that is being constantly

[1] We may remark in passing that this suggests the element of permanent Christian significance in the expectation of a second personal advent of Jesus to rule and judge mankind. Disrobed of the unchristian Jewish features popularly attached, it stands for the conviction of the ultimate vindication of the ideal of life that is found in the personality of Jesus.

renewed in the image of its creator." To be able to pronounce on myself such a judgment implies the possession of a lofty quality of moral discernment and a purity of purpose that can come to one in no other way than by being participant in the life that is divine. He who lacks the feeling that he is sinful is surely devoid of that high sense of personal worth that carries with it the certainty of imperishability. He who possesses it is already aware of an inward exaltation that enables him to repudiate his own evil deeds as unworthy of himself in his true character.

3. It follows that *the attempt to determine the metaphysical nature of sin must be futile.* The term, "nature," often covers a multitude of theological errors. To speak of the nature of a thing is to refer to its place in the whole order of things. But sin is the negation of the true order, the recalcitrancy that leaves the true order unrealized. Sin is the negation of the higher righteousness, the want of the higher good. As soon as we try to identify it with some particular impulse or passion, or some particular aim or purpose standing by itself, we find that we have named something that under certain circumstances is necessary. Evil *is* but only in relation to the good and can be known to be evil only when the higher good has come into view. If, for example, *sensuousness* be called sin, we find discredit put upon a quality of our constitution without which we men of body and soul would be something other than men—and it is good to be men, to possess appetites of sense and to have regard to them. Or if it be said that sin is constituted by *selfishness*, can we mean that sinlessness consists in having no regards for one's self? Sin is not an isolable fact in the world. The consciousness of

sin is the fact that now concerns us and we find it meaningless apart from the consciousness of the better life. This it is that gives to sin its serious character.

4. *There can be no history of sin in itself.* The story of the sins that men commit, of the evils of which they are guilty, is a part of the story of the struggle for the better life and apart from this it has no meaning. The history of the world, from the Christian point of view, is the story of this struggle. It is the story of the effort to transcend a good already attained by the attainment of a higher good. It is the story of the conflict between the less worthy and the more worthy purposes of the hearts of men or, in the community-relation, between those who hold to the former and those who hold to the latter. If we adopt the Augustinian conception of the existence of two mutually exclusive kingdoms of the world, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil, or the kingdom of evil and the kingdom of grace, each of which develops its character with growing momentum as the ages pass till the bitter and exterminating struggle comes to an end by the extinction of one of these kingdoms, we must remember that this theory is an idealization of the facts. There are no institutions exclusively bad or exclusively good, but evil and good are in all. The same is true of individuals. In the life of humanity it is the strength of an ancient good that stands most dangerously in the way of the new.

The truth of the whole matter may be stated in a paradox. The power of an evil lies in the good from which it has sprung. Evil is perverted good. Good that, in the presence of a higher good, is still adhered to as the highest becomes evil. Sinning occurs when one seeks to be satisfied with a former good that is now become inferior to a prof-

ered good not anticipated before. For example, the building up of a nation, with homogeneity of spirit in its citizens, enjoying continuity of territory and possession of material power, is an achievement of great worth. It can come about only by the widening of the earlier mental horizon of its people and the breaking down of the narrowness and mutual antipathy of forms of their earlier tribal life, so that they become welded together in the pursuit of larger common aims. The spirit of nationalism and its embodiment in institutions suited to its nature marks a notable victory over those disintegrating forces that, left unchecked, would reduce the public life to a lower potency. But this very nationalism, if it be set in opposition to that humanitarian spirit that knows no gradation of rights among men but foresees all the nations of the earth as a family united in mutual love and service, may become a fearful menace to human welfare. For, when it becomes dominant, it produces wars of aggression, reducing happy peoples to want, and turning their homes into scenes of desolation. *Then* to set up nationalism as an aim of supreme worth is to consecrate a community-selfishness as a holy thing and to repudiate the principle of universal and equal love—a capital offense in the eye of the Christian. The positive good embodied in nationalism may become a source of the vilest malignity. Devotion to it becomes, in that case, a sin against humanity.

The struggle for the higher good is to go on from age to age in the life of humanity as it is to go on from day to day in the life of the man—and just because it is the life of a man that is being lived by each one. We must not expect the consciousness of sin to die down in the human heart.

For it is the reverse side of the consciousness of the good yet to be fully attained.

II. THE CAUSES OF SINNING

In our treatment of this subject we have found that our thoughts, beginning with the inner self-judgment of the man, have turned to the course of human affairs in general. It has seemed as if the question of the deliverance of any man from the bondage to evil within must be insoluble apart from the deliverance of our whole humanity from evil. We find this supposition confirmed when we turn our attention to the mental state called "repentance."

1. *The account which the average man would give of some act of his which he now regrets, if he speaks unaffectedly, would be purely empirical.* He speaks regretfully of a past deed for which he blames himself directly. Perchance he did not recognize the wrong in it until after it was done. Under a given set of circumstances, with or without prompting from another, under the play of personal desire or the force of some uncontrolled passion, he did the the deed which, in the light of its consequences or of a clearer view of the whole situation, he now condemns and wishes it had been left undone.

The listener, desiring further light on the penitent's state of mind both at the time the act was committed and at the present moment, might ask two questions: First, How came the impulse you speak of or the incitement from without to have so much influence over your will? Secondly, Were you the solitary perpetrator of the deed or were others implicated with you in the act? The answer to the first question involves an examination of the mo-

tive of the deed, that is, the aim held, perhaps, only half-consciously in the mind. The answer to the second involves a study of his affiliations. The two answers point in a single direction.

It will be seen at once that the deed was no mere accident in the man's life. No stray impulse, no sudden uprising of a fleeting passion, no suggestion by another could alone have led to it. The significant thing is that the *set of his mind*, shaped under the play of many influences in earlier days came into action and to clear light in his act. It was such a deed as a man with such a life behind him would surely commit under the same circumstances. As he reflects on his deed it comes about that it is not so much the particular act as the state of mind which eventuated in the act that troubles him so sorely. It is *himself* that troubles him.

Our penitent might not care to answer the second question but the enquirer must press it. Was he never a member of a family or of some other group that under certain conditions encouraged deeds of this kind? If now he repudiates such acts will he not place himself in an unfriendly relation to these persons? That is, does not the act represent the character of a human community? Is any sinner, indeed, an absolute anarchist? Is he an alien to mankind? In his sinning has he set his will against the collective will of the whole of humanity? There can be but one answer:—Most certainly not. The attraction of another person or other persons was operative in his will. To this degree his act was a community act. This would have made it hard for him to refrain from the act, had he wished to do so. To refuse at the time or to renounce it afterwards would be to pronounce a judgment of condem-

nation upon that community. The wonder is that he should repent at all. The answer to both questions is to the effect that the set of his mind that determined his deed is a community inheritance. The original sin lies there. So long as he remains in this community-life he remains a sinner. Its common life, in this aspect, is a communion in sin. In reality, however, the discovery of the origin of any deed is a very complicated study. The long perpetuated habits of mind and of physical action through evolutionary processes in great communities, the organization of society in support of these, the legislative enactments and court decisions looking toward the perpetuity and prosperity of communities, the cross-influences from many other communities within or without the larger community—these and a multitude of untraceable influences have been united in the perpetration of any single deed we may mention. So then, when it comes to passing judgment on a single deed of wrong we find that the original of it lies out there in a vast human realm beyond our power to know fully.

2. *Yet at the same time it is true that every man's deeds are different from those of any other personality or of all others combined, if such a combination of persons were possible.* The indefinable and incalculable number of social influences that are constitutive of the character of his act are fused in his personality and stamped by his personal volition. That precise act had never been done, and could never have been done, by another. The community sin takes on a modification of its character through his initiative. He is right in focussing his mind upon his own responsibility and saying, "I, and I alone, am the sinner." Short of this his repentance means nothing but an eva-

sion. It is the moral consciousness of the man that produces a modification of the moral consciousness of the community. The community consciousness is never static. It is constantly under process of modification through the self-directed action of the man. If, therefore, the community makes the man, the man also remakes the community. In order to find any meaning in the community life it is necessary that we discover the character of the inner conscious life of the man.

In consequence, we find our surest guide to the understanding of the meaning of sin, not in the crimes denounced in the laws of the civil state, not in the prohibitive maxims or conventions of society, not in the heresies condemned by the church, not in the list of misdeeds that involve a breach of her discipline; but in the meditations, confessions, longings and prayers of great souls. The fifty-first psalm, the Pauline recitals of the deeds of a misdirected life, the retractations of an Augustine, the penitential cries of some hymnist like him who wrote, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee,"—these shall teach us. Who is it then that fully knows another's sin? Who can make due confession for another? In all awareness of sin there is a sense of loneliness—"God be merciful to me, *the sinner*."

So it is my prerogative to pronounce judgment on myself. None other knows or can know the range of my moral dearth. None other can know the depth of my moral infamy. The judgment of others is likely to be too lenient and, if I accept it as my own, I am likely to be deterred from entering upon that higher life for which my sense of sin is a preparation and of which it is really a prophecy.

Again, I say, it is my prerogative to call myself a sinner, since that very self-judgment is really a reflex of the higher life upon which already I, the sinner, am entering. The consciousness of sin is already in potency the knowledge of forgiveness.

III. THE MEANING OF FORGIVENESS

The foregoing discussion of the consciousness of sin supplies the point of view from which the question of the forgiveness of sins is to be treated. At the outset we are confronted with a series of somewhat complicated doctrinal formulations which grew up in the midst of the controversies between Protestants and Catholics and were further developed by the controversies among Protestants themselves. In these controversies the terms, Atonement, Justification, Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Sanctification are continually in use. They are commonly treated, not as synonyms, but as representing an organized body of truths respecting the way of salvation, truths made known to men by explicit information from God. The matter has already been referred to in an earlier chapter of this work. At this point we cannot enter upon a detailed discussion of this great subject but must limit our attention to the heart of it all, which is found in the idea of forgiveness. We cannot regard the above terms as presenting really separate facts. They are all figurative, metaphors representing from various standpoints the one great spiritual fact, the fact, namely, that each one of us who enters upon the better life does so by virtue of a communication to our hearts of the gracious divine will. To lose sight of this is to expose oneself to the danger of sub-

stituting the acceptance of a theoretical system for the heart-experience without which all such systems are but cobwebs of the brain.

1. *The reality of the forgiveness of our sins and of the eternal worth of this experience supplies the basis of all theories of atonement, justification, sanctification, and reconciliation.* In the idea of Atonement, recourse is had to the practice of priestly mediation as a means of securing release from the consequences of our misdeeds. In the idea of Justification, recourse is had to the methods of political jurisprudence as a means of securing the safety of the state and the well-being of its subjects against the menace of criminality. In the idea of Sanctification, recourse is had to the purificatory ceremonies by which people have sought to purge themselves from the moral or ceremonial filth they have contracted. In the idea of Reconciliation, recourse is had to the idea of the mediating mutual friend who brings two estranged friends back to mutual trust and love. In the idea of Forgiveness, recourse is had to the familiar and deeply cherished remembrance of the graciousness of one whom we have wronged —graciousness in bestowing undeserved kindness upon us to win us away from our wrong-doing and to bring us to share the wealth of goodness in his own heart. They are all valuable metaphorical representations of the manner in which the conscience, when burdened with the sense of one's personal misdoing, is relieved from the sense of failure and helplessness and filled with a new sense of personal worth and of strength for achievements hitherto unattempted and impossible. We prefer to begin with the idea of forgiveness because it seems to bring us the nearest to the actual experiences of our common life.

We have tried to show what is meant by a confession of sin. We have tried to show the far-reaching implications of this confession in that it involves an outreach into vast realms of human life that eventuates in the discovery that every man's sin becomes ultimately race-wide in its connections. Forgiveness must have implications as broad. Forgiveness is so great an act that reverent men have held that God only can perform this deed. They have hoped in this way to guard the divine prerogative and at the same time to guard men against the temptation to belittle the deed or make it subsidiary to the purposes of institutional systems. In this aim they were right, but at the same time they obscured the fact that it is just in the communication of the grace that is in one human heart to another's heart that the divine grace is operative.

The idea of forgiveness, then, relates to a very common human experience. As was intimated in the opening chapter of this work, the experience of forgiving another or of being forgiven by him is an event familiar to us all. It is along this road we travel when we seek to make the higher life our aim. Salvation comes by way of forgiveness. This is the way of betterment for all mankind. The alternative is, on the one side, persistence in the wrongdoing, aggravation of the injury by new acts of the same character, and, on the other side, resentment and retaliation, until the venom of these two hearts spreads through their whole life, works like a foul infection into the life of the community in which they inhere and thence is carried out into the life of mankind. In the end we shall find that there are no other alternatives than these.

2. What, then, is it that really occurs when one person forgives another? In the first place, *there is a full recogni-*

tion of the character and gravity of the offense. To fail of this would be to come short of realizing the depth of the inward relation of man to man and the dependence of each on each. The sin that has been committed is a violation of that holy bond and carries with it the befouling of our mutual spiritual life. There is no telling how far the infection may spread or the human ruin it may work. It is, therefore, a matter of profound concern to the offended one. He cannot ignore the act. Such an attitude would carry with it a dereliction of duty toward humanity itself. To say that I can ignore the offense, that I can simply let it go as of no account, is to say that I am permitted to ignore my fellowman's state of mind as unworthy of my attention. That would be the same as to encourage an attitude of contempt toward him. I should then become the worse offender. Instead, I must seek to penetrate into the heart of his life, to find what it is that, working in his mind, led him to the perpetration of this deed. I must trace his inheritance, as was indicated in the earlier portion of this chapter, that I may know his handicap. I place myself by sympathy in his place and think of him as I would think of myself in such a condition. At length I feel as if his burden were mine, his sin my own. The guilt, the badness, the pain, the agony of it drive me to seek to save him. I now feel coming upon me demands such as I never knew before. Life has taken on a profound seriousness, a deeper meaning, a richer character. It is now more truly worth the living at the same time that it has become the harder to live.

In the second place, *in the act of forgiveness, there is the communication to the sinner of the state of mind of the one sinned against.* No formal acquittal, no pronouncement

of legal justness would be of any use to him or any satisfaction to me, the wronged one. My aim is to have him see things as I see them, to pass on his act the same judgment as I pass. For, otherwise, I should leave him in spirit where he was before. I must seek to bring him into the secret of my life, to animate his bosom with aims like mine, to lead him to appreciate the things that seem worthful to me. This means that I must seek to awaken in him smitings of conscience, agonies of repentance, with the mingled sense of defeat and hope thereby involved—by whatever necessary means this may be brought about. I must communicate my very selfhood to him. Thus I give myself to him and for him. I am become his servant. My soul goes for his. I am become his savior. We are now in fellowship with each other. A new and higher communion of spirit has been established. I live in him, he lives in me. He is forgiven.

From that day onward a new field of common action lies before us. For his heart and mine are now wide open to the needs of the men and women who shared his inheritance—and mine. Our human inheritance has caused the offense to abound but cannot grace be made to abound the more exceedingly? There rises in prospect a new world. I need, he needs that new world. The newly awakened capabilities of my spirit reach out to the regions beyond and I picture to myself an era to come when all mankind shall know the grace of forgiveness. Therewith shall my own need be satisfied. For I too have been an offender in many ways and I find now flowing into my soul those rich streams of graciousness which other hearts have sought to communicate to me as they also saw my sin, just as I saw my fellowman's.

In the third place, *in the very act of forgiving another I am become a recipient of good from him.* In seeking to forgive him I am attempting to communicate to him the secret of that higher life into which I have entered. Whatever degree of blame or worthiness I may see in him, it is impossible, on the other hand, to ignore his right to participate in whatever worth I may possess without at the same time losing in some degree the sense of my own personal worth *to other men.* There is no gainsaying his claims upon me, though he may not be aware of them.

But obstacles arise. We occupy different spiritual areas. Our interests are alien. Our mutual understanding is impeded by the difference between our respective inheritances. The state of each of our minds has a history behind it. Each pertains to a spiritual community to which the other is a kind of stranger. My task turns out to be something more serious than that of transferring him to the community to which I belong. That entire community in which he inheres claims my efforts. It must be recreated in a new character.

I soon find him making unexpected demands upon me. Resources of my nature that were never before in requisition are now summoned into action. Virtues and defects hitherto unsuspected in my character are disclosed. I find myself reaching out for help the moment I try to help him. The patience, kindliness, generosity, faithfulness and sympathy that I have seen in others I now long to possess in myself. How humiliated I feel as time after time I fail to reach the heart of this fellowman of mine. But new accessions of power continually come. In the end I have communicated my mind to him. I have won him. And what an increment of good has hereby become mine!

It is not merely that my inherent resources are raised to a higher worth. I have become a beneficiary of his. There are qualities in him that attract me. I find that he has been made the more approachable through the community of influences that have worked in him. I now enter a larger community life than before and my faith takes on a correspondingly larger meaning. In forgiving him I have received forgiveness beyond anything that came to me before I forgave him. I see a new meaning in the words of Jesus: "If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will forgive your trespasses, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive you yours."

One also thinks here of the words of Paul, "Where sin abounded grace hath abounded the more exceedingly." For through the very fact that one man has sinned against another and the other has requited it by efforts to impart to the offender a state of mind like his own, which will prevent him from repeating the offense, both are led into a higher, richer, truer spiritual life than they knew before. The forgiven is made to know a power of betterment that was alien to his former experiences. Account for it as we may, the fairest flowers of goodness that flourish in the human bosom blossom on a soil where personal wrongs have invaded the sacred private territory of a fellow man. When one had sinned against the other and been forgiven freely by him there is discovered a depth of love and wealth of fellowship between men that never comes to the knowledge of those whose spirits have never passed through such a testing. Perhaps our shell-shocked world may turn out to be but the vestibule to a temple whose

doors could never have been entered by us had we not lived in just such a world, with all its sin and sorrow.

3. *We have been treating of forgiveness as though it were an exercise of grace from man to man. And so it is. We know of no other way in which it comes to light and this human forgiveness is identical with the divine.* What is to hinder that it be so? If divine forgiveness were something quite different, how could it become known to us? Is it added to the human to make it complete? But in what manner can it be added if not in the human way? That startling utterance ascribed to Jesus, "Whosesoever sins you forgive, they are forgiven to them; whosesoever sins you retain they are retained," has been the occasion of much controversy because the utterance has been given an official rather than a personal application. Here again, institutionalism has perverted a great truth and obscured the way to the better life. Protestantism also has erred in this respect by institutionalizing their application, though in a different direction. For we are not to think of forgiveness as the ordered and pre-determined result of the successful execution of a "plan of salvation" but as the actual, every-day exercise on the part of the common man of a gracious, purifying, personal influence upon those who wrong their fellowmen. We know no other way.

That grace in me by which I am enabled to lift my erring fellowman into a sphere of life where his former sins can have a place no more, came to me as a divine endowment in my spirit. But it came to me in no independence of my fellowman. It came down through the ages and generations to me, being constantly enriched in its course through the new exercise of it by each one who has for-

given another, till the tiny streamlet from a far-off fountain has swollen into a mighty flood of divine goodness broadening out over the life of our humanity.

4. *This one great, age-long forgiving act bears for us who are Christians the name of Jesus Christ.* We are not now thinking of an official relation he is supposed to bear to us but we see revealed in his personality as it is set forth in the New Testament and as it fulfils itself in the Christian communion through the centuries, the quality of mind that is to achieve this longed-for end. This is "the grace that was in our Lord Jesus Christ." It is He who gave it the momentum with which it has passed down to us today and is taking possession of the world.

In the end we know no other "means" of salvation. Some have set up definite acts or rites and others definite doctrines as divinely instituted means of bringing this grace to men. None can deny that men have found at times some act or doctrine an instrument for awakening the soul to an awareness of this divine activity in the world of men. None can forbid the use of them, but none of these instruments is indispensable. The only immediately effective means of salvation, after all, is the free communion of spirit with spirit, the impingement of personality upon personality, the revealing of the secret of one heart to another, wherever it may take place. The free mingling of men on the great highways of life, the trade and barter of the market place, the common struggle to make the forces of nature ministrant to human good, the attack and defense on the field of battle, the love and light of the fireside and the social circle, the public assembly for worship—all these and a thousand others are as truly means of salvation as the most sacred

rites of the hallowed place. The whole world is a Christian sanctuary and every common thing can be turned into an instrument to reveal the soul of the Christ that died for human sin because through all these the grace that is in one heart may flow into another, bringing forgiveness and peace. None, indeed, can forgive sins but God. But this gift is bestowed through the natural human intercourse. The kingdom of God is in our world and the ideal earth is identical with heaven.

To bring our discussion to a summary conclusion:—The truly awful character of sin is manifest when we perceive that he who commits it pertains in spirit to a community life, reaching far back in time and stretching over vast areas of space, and that his sin is rooted in the massed will of that community. A communion in evil has to be confronted when the sin of any man meets us. The question of his salvation becomes at length the question of transferring him from the bosom of the community constituted by their common allegiance to an ideal inferior in its worth over to the bosom of a community constituted by a common allegiance to a new and higher ideal. The battle between sin and grace resolves itself into a conflict between the lower and higher community life. The very loyalty of men to the lower community becomes an impediment to the realization of the higher, even if that lower kingdom is relatively high when compared with a still lower. THE VETO TO PROGRESS TOWARD THE BETTER—THAT IS SIN. WHEN WE SAY THAT SIN IS AGAINST GOD WE MEAN THAT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY OFFENSE AGAINST THE WORTHFUL LIES IN ITS OPPOSITION TO AND REPUDIATION OF THE ONE SUPREME PERSONALITY WHO IS THE ETERNAL PRINCIPLE OF THE HIGHER

COMMUNION, IN WHOM ALL THE GOOD THERE IS FOR US IS PERSONALLY FULFILLED, THE ALONE GOOD BECAUSE HE IS BOTH SOURCE AND AIM OF ALL GOOD IN US.

AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS IS JUST THE ACTION OF THIS PERFECT GOODNESS ACTUALIZING ITSELF IN OUR HUMANITY WHEN ONE WHO IS NEARER TO HIM IMPARTS THAT SAME GOODNESS TO ONE WHO IS FARTHER AWAY AND LIFTS HIM INTO A NEW AND HIGHER COMMUNION WITH GOD. THE CHARACTER OF THIS DIVINE GOODNESS IS REVEALED TO US IN THE VICARIOUS SELF-GIVING OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS LIFE AND IN HIS DEATH FOR MEN. BELIEVE IN HIM AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.

CHAPTER IX

ATONEMENT

The idea of Atonement has been in common use among Christians for a long time. It is indicative of the strong influence which the scriptures of the Old Testament have had on our thinking. It frequently occurs in the priestly literature, particularly in those portions of the Mosaic legislation where the law of sacrifices for the removal of the consequences of sin is laid down. In the single instance of the occurrence of the word in the King James version of the new Testament.[1]—"We also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the atonement"—it is now displaced by the term *reconciliation,* which more correctly expresses the writer's meaning. However, even if the term itself is lacking in our present New Testament, the idea is there, particularly in the epistle to the Hebrews and at points in the other books where the salvation of Jesus Christ is set forth under the form of priestly action. Naturally enough, both on account of the influence of the portions of the New Testament that employ the language of sacrifice and also on account of the large place which priestly intercession and the ritual of sacrifice have had in shaping the life and thought of Christians in ancient and medieval times, the term and the ideas associated with it have a large place in the common usage and thought of many persons in modern times. It is still, perhaps, the most convenient mode of representing the significance of the death of

[1]Rom. 5:11

Jesus Christ. In the imagery of our hymns and prayers he is still pictured as the victim offered in sacrifice to God in order that the sins of men may be remitted and the divine wrath against them removed.

In the Calvinist doctrine, which is typically Protestant, Atonement commonly relates to action in the sphere of law and especially criminal law. Conformably, the relation between God and men is represented as established by legislative enactment on the part of God, the one Supreme Legislator. As the ruin of mankind came through the violation of positive law and the sentence of condemnation that justly followed, so also their salvation can some not otherwise than through the due vindication of the purpose of the law by a Mediator who interposes his action on their behalf. Whether or no this representation may tend to make those who accept it profoundly moral persons or merely formal legalists will depend a good deal on the degree to which their own inner life has been controlled by a due appreciation of the worth of their own and all others' personality. Now, it is indisputable that one of the mightiest forces at work today reshaping the forms of human government in the direction of greater humaneness is just this growing sense of personal worth in all men. That is to say, the character and the forms of government are being reconstructed from within. Accordingly, the spirit and the method of the divine government must be reinterpreted from this newer point of view if it is to be construed as serving the needs of men. If, then, the way of salvation may be truly represented in keeping with the highest conception of government now in vogue, a new interpretation of atonement must follow.

I. MODERN CONCEPTION OF GOVERNMENT

We observe the change in the modern Christian's way of conceiving his relation to God as compared with the view that prevailed in the days of the Reformation. In those days God was conceived mainly as Lawgiver, Sovereign and Judge of men, inasmuch as he was their Creator and the Creator of all things. His will was absolute, indisputable and irresistible. It was disclosed to men only in so far as he was pleased to make it known to them. His alone were the rights, theirs alone the responsibilities. He was Lord, they were subjects. His uttered will was the revealed law of their lives. By his decree the violation of his will on the part of his subjects brought condemnation upon them. Condemnation involved punishment eternal. The wrath of God came inevitably on all sinners. Accordingly, the way of salvation was to be found only in some deed that would satisfy divine justice. The terror of a broken law drove men to seek deliverance from its penalty. Such a conception of government, human or divine, is alien to our present democratic views of the civil life.

1. When the common unsophisticated Protestant Christian of the present day who is untrained in the traditional modes of theological speculation just referred to, thinks of his relation to God and especially of the errors and shortcomings of his past life, he is troubled, not by the thought of the sentence imposed by the Supreme Court of heaven but rather by the thought of the wrongs he has done to others as well as himself. The meaning of his misdeeds lies in their violation of the holy and gracious character of the Chiefest Friend of all men, his God. His

wrong relation to God is discovered in his wrong relation to men. These two are inseparable. It is the evil outcome in himself and in them as persons that gives him pain, whether he looks to the present or to the future. This is the direction in which his conscience works. The fear of the punishment to be inflicted by an inexorable Judge does not especially concern him. If he believes that he deserves punishment and must meet it, (as we may well conceive he does) he will accept it willingly and endure it as bravely and uncomplainingly as he may. His thoughts do not turn particularly to a hell of suffering in a world to come after death and he is not greatly moved by the threats of it, as the preachers well know. As to a suffering for wrong-doing, he thinks that the man who endures it courageously, when he deserves it, is a much better man than he who seeks to escape his deserts. He would scorn to accept deliverance solely at another's cost and he feels that anyone who sought to appease his conscience by assuring him that the punishment which was his due was no longer awaiting him because another has borne it in his stead, would be offering to him an indignity which every true man must resent. He does not seek a salvation which requires the sacrifice of his self-respect. As for a provision made for some in order that they may escape, while others bear their own punishment, no being who practiced such favoritism could possibly win his allegiance or respect. The fact is that this manner of representing his relation to God and the means of securing his own personal well-being seems to him very artificial and unnatural. He feels no disposition to discuss the questions which these conceptions of man's relation to God formerly forced upon the attention of thoughtful Christian people. A different

series of conceptions is much more natural to his mind. For example, he is conscious of sinning in that he has failed to live up to his privileges and has chosen the lower, meaner, more selfish way of living and acting when a higher and better way was plainly before him. Again, it is not the external consequences which a Supreme Power has attached to his deeds that alarms him, that gives him so much concern, but the deeds themselves and the habit of mind which they display and cultivate. And when he pictures to himself the true type of a human life as he sees it in Jesus Christ and feels that this is the revelation of God's mind, it is the persistent alienation of his own mind that alarms him and begets contrition of spirit. Accordingly, the modern evangelistic summons, "Get right with God," does not mean that men are to seek a desirable legal standing with God, but that they are to seek to attain to a purpose and practice of life that are in harmony with the divine will. To get right with God is, to the modern Christian, to enter into a truly moral life, a life that God approves, yes, the life that God lives. What else can a righteous life mean after all? For a merely formal righteousness, for a freedom from legal condemnation that is not based on a state of mind and action of the will in unity with the holy will of God, good men care nothing. Such a "righteousness" would be a mockery of real goodness.

2. If, then, a modern man under Christian influence prays for righteousness he never has in mind the desirability of being simply "let go," when the consequences of his misdeeds come into question; neither has he in mind the discovery of some "plan of salvation" by which he can be released from subjection to punishment while he is still

far from pure and holy. Righteousness gets its meaning for him from those human relations in which one man acts towards another as he ought to do, that is, in a truly moral manner. Or when one person who has been wronged by another succeeds in bringing the offender into a state of mind in which he repudiates with sorrow his own act with the result that right relations between them are restored, the offender has become righteous. The wronged one is now able to extend his sympathy and fellowship to the one who formerly wronged him. To seek to inflict pain upon me after he has succeeded in bringing me to a state of mind agreeable to his own would be to seek revenge. It would be immoral and cruel. The term which best expresses this achievement is probably *reconciliation*. Instead, therefore, of carrying our thoughts to the sphere of the court-room with its formal procedure, the Gospel of the present-day Christian leads us to the social circle, where men consciously hold fellowship with one another, where life is made sweet or bitter, good or bad, ruinous or blessed, by the quality of the feelings, thoughts and desires which men cultivate toward one another—in a word, by right moral relations.

Much damage has been done to modern religious faith by attempts to retain at all cost the forms of an orthodoxy that at one time appealed to the sensibilities of religious people very powerfully but have long since lost that power, because men have reached a stage of spirituality that is higher than these forms can express. Were they to succeed, the result would be to substitute an intellectual assent to a scheme of theological speculation for that inner unity of will with God which alone *is salvation*.

I do not mean to say that Guilt, Punishment, Justification have ceased to have any meaning for religious men or that the practices of the courts of justice in no wise assist men in arriving at a true knowledge of the divine way of dealing with a sinful soul. Far from it. But I do mean to say that the use of these terms in the established sense of former times is seriously misleading to inquiring minds that are exercised over the question how to attain to the better life. The continued use of them in this connection is permissible only when they are reinterpreted in keeping with the higher modern jurisprudence. The action of a court of justice, especially in self-governing countries, is to the most intelligent and serious minded people a very solemn procedure. The trial of an issue at law, whether it be civil law or criminal law, is a most solemn occasion, because the worth of the whole system of government under which the people who are concerned in the trial live is at stake and is tried out in the court-room. If right relations between man and man and between the individual and the community in which he has his habitat are not established through the tribunal before which the members of the community have to appear on summons, then the foundations of the whole community life are undermined and the state is threatened with collapse. If justice fails at the courts, the whole government has failed. The courts of the country always reflect the spirit of its constitution. It is quite proper, therefore, to represent the way of salvation under the forms of court procedure, but only on condition that those forms correspond to the nature of the government whose character we apprehend and approve.

3. The general conception of government in Protestant as well as Catholic countries in Reformation days was inherited from the absolutist systems of the ancient past. Protestants of the Reformation times were particularly zealous to exalt the absolutist conception of government because it furnished a powerful base of attack upon the pretentions and the make-shifts of Catholicism. They held that God, being the sole author of the law, must also be sole judge. While his laws bring blessing to the obedient, their violation brings an unalterable judgment upon transgressors. That judgment is not directed to the good of the subject to be judged (for the transgressor has in the premises no claim for favors), but it aims solely at the vindication of justice and of the authority of the Ruler. When at last the Judgment Day comes, mercy is out of the question. The only question is the question of guilt. The assessment of the penalty inevitably follows. We have seen at an earlier point in our study that the Protestant orthodox doctrine of atonement and justification reposes on this conception of government.

Under Protestant influence there has been a wonderful development of democracy, especially in the last hundred years or so. At first glance this seems strange. With such conceptions as we have described underlying Protestantism the development of a Protestant democracy would seem out of the question. And yet it is perfectly natural. For the chiefest thing in Protestantism is not its theory of atonement and justification but the deep religious consciousness which the theory was intended to support. The greatest thing in Protestantism is its consciousness of personal worth in the sight of God. The believer is sure that he is elect as one of God's beloved. He has been re-

deemed by the Christ. He has the testimony of the divine Spirit to his sonship with God. He is conscious of inner unity with God. This religious experience of the Protesttants made them invincible. In defence of this "holy deposit" within them they became the valiant resisters of injustice, cruelty and oppression. How natural, how inevitable, it was that in course of time they felt that the only acts of legislation that could be regarded as laws of God were those which expressed the purest and mightiest strivings of their own spirits. It only required a single step further for the growing humanitarianism of the evangelical spirit to perceive in all men, perhaps in a crude and half-suppressed condition, the same deep longing for the better life which had come to the birth in the Christian. The outcome is the discovery of acts of divine legislation in the normal aspirations of the human spirit. Here lies the true foundation of democracy. God legislates for men by legislating in them.

4. This modern evangelical conception of law has been mightily reinforced, if it was not first of all suggested, by the scientific conception of natural law. A formulation by science of a law of nature is a statement of the mode of the operation of those energies which are immanent in the natural world. By bringing together the scientific conception of natural law and the evangelical conception of the spiritual law in man the way is opened for us to recognize in the self-legislative action of the human spirit at its highest development the revelation of the inmost secret of the universe, the disclosure of the purpose for which it exists.

This enables us to understand the deep reverence which democratic peoples feel for their own laws. These peoples

agree to observe no laws imposed on them from without but only those which set forth their own sovereign legislative power. These alone can arouse in them the sense of compulsion. To prove false to these would be to cast contempt upon all that is good in themselves and in their fellow-citizens. The laws of their country become to them the highway to the noblest personal and community destiny—the laws of God. The enforcement of these laws even against themselves, as well as against all other violators of them, becomes essential to their self-respect and their ultimate good. Herein lies the source of the solidarity and unconquerableness of democratic peoples.

5. A court of justice amongst such peoples is surrounded by a halo of peculiar sancity and reverence. For, as has been said already, in the proceedings of the court the inner character of their government and its worth are disclosed and brought to the acid test. The act of justice is just an act of government carried out to the end. *The aim of the proceedings of the court is identical with the aim of the legislation, namely, the good of all who are concerned in it.* The enlightened citizen of the country, even if he should find himself standing before the court to be tried, sees in the dignity of the court a mark of his own personal dignity. The laws under which he is judged are, to the measure of his powers and influence, the product of his own legislative act. If he should be pronounced guilty of a violation of those laws, he himself participates in the pronouncement of the guilt and the execution of the penalty, and he knows it. Hence he can, with a dignity and self-respect enhanced by the action of the court, submit himself to the consequences. To escape these consequences when he merits them would be a loss to him. His good

cannot be attained unless the law be enforced. This is the motive of the court also. Unless the court seeks and accomplishes the good of the accused as well as the good of those whom he has wronged it has not fully achieved the end for which it was constituted and to that extent its efforts are abortive. In that case justice has failed of perfect fulfilment. The court, in order to succeed in its business, must bring it about that the guilty man himself regard the act of the court as his own act, an act from which he as a free legislator could not refrain without a sense of terrible loss, even if he were given the opportunity. If "justice" be not remedial it is less than justice.

6. If this is the conception of government that is now obtaining in democratic countries, it is impossible for a Christian citizen of such countries to construe the character and meaning of the divine law in a lower sense. This means, of course, that the ideas which have been commonly employed to express the divine justice must be reinterpreted, if they are to have a place in the scientific thinking of modern Christian men. Do these ideas retain their validity? I think they undoubtedly do, and more powerfully than ever—it being understood, however, that no figures of speech borrowed from the relations of men with one another or with the universe can fully express the meaning of a man's relation with God. In any case they are metaphorical expressions and at points they come short of expressing the full truth. The representation of God's relations with men in terms of jurisprudence is always figurative and we come sooner or later to the point where the figure fails. But, accepting the validity of the juridical terms, *guilt, punishment, justification, atonement,* I will now attempt a reinterpretation of these in

accordance with the quality of spiritual life which the common intelligent Protestant Christian enjoys today.

II. THE MEANING OF GUILT

1. Guilt and the consciousness of guilt are inseparable in principle. At first glance this affirmation may seem to deprive guilt of its reality and make it merely a subjective condition, a merely empirical experience. To the superficial view, the question of guilt is simply a question of objective fact—was such and such an act committed in contravention of law? It will be said that many a time someone is guilty of crime who is quite unaware of it, but his ignorance of the law furnishes no basis for setting aside its claims and by no means nullifies the evil effects of the deed. This statement is inexact and involves a careless use of language.

Owing to the growing influence of the Christian spirit on modern jurisprudence, increasing attention is being given by courts of justice to the question of the competency of a person charged with crime to understand the significance of his own acts. Juveniles and mental defectives are not treated with the severity to which criminals of normal intelligence must submit. The reason for this is plain enough. There is the fear of wronging an imperfect human personality by placing it under conditions that would prevent its normal development and turn its life of hope into a tragedy. In a country where the Christian idea of the supreme worth of personality prevails the prospect of punishing a man for committing an act that he is unable to regard as evil is very repugnant to people of high moral sensitiveness and they shrink from being

participants in a judicial process that involves it. To them it makes a very great difference whether a man is aware of the binding character of the law which his action outwardly violates or not. The state is under as full an obligation to inculcate in its citizens an understanding and appreciation of the meaning and purpose of its laws and a desire to participate in the making and enforcement of them as it is to see that law-breakers meet the consequences of their disobedience. It is manifestly impossible in the end to vindicate any law or give it the true force of law except by producing in the minds of all who are subject to it, whether they keep it or violate it, a due appreciation of its worth. In other words, a man is truly guilty of violating the law only when in its final meaning it is the law of his own mind. We are here reminded of the self-examination of Paul:—"When I would do good, evil is present with me. . . . . With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin . . . . . I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into subjection to the law of sin which is in my members." The profound sense of guilt which he felt was the outcome of his discovery of a divided allegiance on his part. The permanent legislative power of his own intelligence was constantly challenged by a recalcitrant disposition fostered by the upspringing of desires that had never been reduced to obedience to the supreme inner principle of his true spirit. This immanent abiding force in his mind is identical with the law of God. Hence the heinousness of the insurrection in his "members". Here lies the final secret of the sense of guilt. It is quite in vain for another to charge me with guilt unless a preceding or following utterance springs up from my own

heart: "I am guilty". Unless this come to pass, the tribunal of justice and its sentence of pain for my misdoing are all in vain, so far as I am concerned. This amounts to saying that guiltiness is possible only because of a certain quality in the thinking of him who is charged with guilt. To accuse one of guilt is to ascribe to him this high quality of mind that makes his legislative action one with the utterance of the will of God. It is a mode of acknowledging his inner dignity and worth. Of course, the degree of sensitiveness which people feel toward the law of God and the violation of it differs indefinitely in the individuals who experience it, but it is experienced in some degree by all. Guilt is meaningless where there can be no consciousness of guilt.

2. At this point we raise the question, *Can one person be the bearer of another's guilt*? We might further inquire, What advantage would it be to the other if he could? If I truly bear another's guilt must I not also bear his consciousness of guilt? To take away another's guilt and still leave him burdened with the consciousness of guilt is surely to make him the subject of a grievous delusion. To take away the consciousness of guilt and still leave him to suffer under guilt is to rob him in part of his true manhood. There may be a use for legal fiction in our human courts of justice because of the defective character of all our arrangements to set men right with themselves and with one another, but to resort to such a fiction as to affirm that a man is just before God as regards his legal standing, when in his heart and conduct he remains unjust, is to make God's grace a ministry of iniquity. There can be no *transfer* of guilt from one person to another, unless it be possible to reduce all righteousness to a

mere formality. A doctrine that teaches such a transfer sacrifices the spirit of Christianity to the exigencies of a legal argument and beclouds the whole question of a man's right relation with God.

3. But at the same time there is a sense in which one can and must bear another's guilt. It is true in a figurative manner, but the figure truly expresses a profound religious and moral experience. One can be said to bear another's guilt when he becomes aware, through the guilty action of the other, of the unworthy character of a likemindedness on his own part with the other. Thus he feels the other's sin as his own and repents for it. The sin of a single member of some community becomes a disclosure to the other members of a depravity that is common to them all, so that the horror they feel in the presence of his deed becomes a sense of guilt and unworthiness on their part. In such a case the members of the community cannot allow him to bear the painful consequences of his misdeeds alone. They must assume responsibility for it along with him and become co-sufferers with him. Further, one can become so fully aware of the worth of another's personality as to perceive with unutterable anguish the tragedy of another's failure. Feeling the pain and burden of it as deeply as if it were his own he vicariously makes it his own and undergoes the same agony of effort and endurance to rescue him from it as he would in the endeavor to save himself from a similar fate. "Bear ye one another's burdens," said Paul, "and so fulfill the law of Christ." And, speaking out of his experience as a member of a community that had missed its day of visitation, he exclaims, in the pain of his repenting for them, "I suffer endless anguish of heart. I could have

wished myself accursed and banished from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my natural kinsmen." But he who so bears another's guilt does so, not that they might escape from a similar pain of mind but rather that they might also bear it in the richest sense open to them and thereby find for themselves and others salvation from the guilt of the sin.

III. THE MEANING OF PUNISHMENT

1. Guilt is commonly conceived as liability to punishment. That is, when its consequences are in mind. But the guilt itself is possibly the punishment. The phrase, "Punishment of sin," is familiar to all, but its meaning is quite obscure. The term Punishment is used sometimes to denote simply the infliction of pain willingly, for example, when two pugilists are said to punish each other severely. But when we are speaking of morals or of government, where a presumed offense against law is in question, punishment refers to judicial infliction of pain, that is, pain imposed by a higher authority on account of a misdeed or a violation of law. Everybody is familiar with instances of suffering imposed with this intent. Parents punish their children, teachers their pupils, and states their citizens for the violation of their laws. A league of nations may punish other nations for infraction of international law. It is unquestionable that from these universal customs we learned to think of those sufferings which are beyond the power of man to inflict, or which are altogether untraceable to man's will, as imposed by the will of the Ruler of the universe. The popular tendency is to regard all extraordinary, unlooked for, or otherwise unaccountable

sufferings as the divine punishment of some sin. After the manner of ancient theories of pain, the suffering is looked upon as an execution of divine justice. It is doubtful that the general acceptance of the scientific law of cause and effect will dispel this view, though we may expect it to issue in a larger interpretation of the consequences of sin.

2. This raises the question, whether it is legitimate for us to represent the relation of human actions to the forces of nature as exhibiting a method of the moral government of the world. Is it legitimate for us to transfer to the system of the universe the methods of human governments in the administration of their systems of law? Can the working of the universe be properly regarded as a method of divine jurisprudence? A moment's thought will show that there can be no *ex cathedra* or categorical answer to this question. Our actual knowledge of the course of the universe and of its ultimate purpose is so infinitesimal that it would be arrogant presumption to claim that the problem is solved. It must be confessed that in this vast realm, "We have but faith, we cannot know." Yet it is true that we do have faith and cannot live without it. This faith constantly asserts itself in the effort to know and it cannot be satisfied with a negative answer. There is no help in nescience. And therefore we must ever look out over the world in the hope of finding a confirmation and enlargement of our faith. The consciousness of sin, the judgment of its unworthy and ill-deserving character, is ineradicable in our souls. The demand that there be a recognition of this in the government of the world, if there be a government of the world at all, is an imperative of our nature. The vindication of this contention is the task of the apologist of morals and at this point we shall leave

it to him. Ours is the humbler task of expounding the sense in which the Christian speaks of the punishment of sin as occurring in the course of human life in the world.

The belief that the course of things in the world will surely bring suffering upon the wrong-doer, has always been popular. In fact the severe view of the matter has always been the most popular even in the Christian church with its Gospel of love. The milder views have won the allegiance of comparatively few. The doctrine that there is an eternal hell for wicked people has had a larger and more influential following than the opposite doctrine that there is no hell. The Protestants of the Reformation had the choice of declaring for the belief in heaven, hell, and purgatory. They retained, as we have seen, the belief in heaven and hell but they rejected purgatory. And why? Not because they delighted in the prospect of endless agony for anyone, though in times of controversy malevolence is apt to assert itself, and may have done so then. But they rejected the doctrine of purgatory because it took a compromising view of the desert of punishment. It was more self-respecting to take the chance of hell, because they felt that the moral issue must be ever clear and decisive, because they wanted no terms with sin. And the choice they made was their way of expressing their loyalty to righteousness and the sense of the turpitude of human guilt. Sin deserved punishment and the traditional doctrine of hell was the best symbol they could find for the truth of the matter.

3. It may help us to appreciate the popular belief about the punishment of sin, if we review briefly the development of it within the Jewish and Christian communions. Primitive peoples, generally, believed that all suffering

was inflicted by a mightier being because the sufferer had incurred his anger. Death was emphatically considered as a divine retribution for sin. Ancient Israel shared this common belief and gradually moralized it. Without working out a consistent theory, they held that sin and death were ultimately inseparable. The penalty, though unavoidable at last, might be deferred by a righteous life and by gaining, in consequence, the merited favor of the deity. The question took a more serious turn for them after the Babylonian captivity, when the sense of personal worth and personal responsibility came very forcibly home to them. The belief that all of the people who suffered in the national tragedy were not equally sinners and that the portion of them who were truly righteous would be vindicated found support in the expectation of a kingdom of the righteous in the time to come. But such a hope required, in consistency, that those righteous ones of Israel who had perished without having come to the kingdom should be raised from the dead in order to receive their reward in that kingdom. Death still remained the lot of the wicked. They had lost the kingdom for all time to come. At a later time, when a doctrine of a resurrection of both the just and the unjust came to the support of the belief in the righteous judgment of God, which would make a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked by punishing the one and rewarding the other, the idea of a "second death", the death eternal, from which there is no resurrection, came in. Thus was evil to be requited and at the same time destroyed. This was a very common view among early Christians. Still later, when the doctrine of the inherent immortality of the human soul became the common belief among Chris-

tians, the belief in an eternal, irrevocable, irremediable death was changed to belief in the eternal suffering of the wicked. This doctrine of an everlasting punishment became the orthodox doctrine of both Catholics and Protestants and one of their most powerful weapons of appeal to conscience-stricken people.

It will appear from this brief review that the *growing severity of the Christian doctrine of punishment roughly parallels the growing intensity of the moral judgment.* Can it be that this development of the doctrine of punishment marks a corresponding loss of that human tenderness and pity that is so priceless an asset in our Christianity? Hardly so. For this love and this severity are often found together in one and the same human heart. The more natural explanation of this development is, that a deepening sense of the meaning and worth of true goodness has carried with it a deepening sense of the greatness of the loss that falls upon him who misses it. A sense of the depth of badness that lies in the acts that exclude a man from participation in this goodness is a natural reaction.

"But," it will be said in reply, "is not the traditional belief in an endless hell rapidly losing its hold on the minds of Christian people, and that too in an age when men are becoming increasingly sensitive to the presence and the power of evils that were at one time no source of grave anxiety?" Undoubtedly, this is the case. But it does not arise, methinks, from a lowering of the sense of the evil of sinning, but from a richer apprehension of the meaning of the Christian imperative to *remove* the sin. The old doctrine is losing its hold because of its lack of moral worth. It made punishment itself the end of justice and counted such an end of greater account than the

redemption of the sinner. It represents a degrading view of humanity by treating a portion of it as irredeemable and thereby abandons the hope of the betterment of the race. The imposition of suffering, without the aim of making it instrumental to the good of the sufferer, is brutalizing to him who inflicts it as well as to him who endures it. A hell that expresses no purpose of profiting him who enters into it lies outside the sphere of the moral life. The man who can be frightened by the prospect of such a hell is for that very reason to be pronounced an immoral man and such a physical fear is not worthy of a true humanity. Punishment must always be retributive, but punishment that is, in purpose, retributive and nothing more is rank injustice.

4. The punishment inflicted by divine justice is not identical with any external consequences attached by fiat to the committing of an evil deed but it is carried forward into the inmost life of the sinner by the very act of the will itself. The law of retribution is immanent. The evil deed carries with it as its fearful recompense the making of a character of the same nature with itself. This is terrible, indeed, to contemplate. An evil deed brings forth a progeny of like character with itself, a progeny, ever growing in the range and power of its deeds. There is probably nowhere in literature a more powerful presentation of this terrible truth than the language of the Apostle Paul in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans[1]: "As they disdained to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them up to a reprobate instinct for the perpetration of what is improper, till they are filled with all manner of wickedness, depravity, lust and viciousness, filled to the brim with envy, murder, quarrels, intrigues, and maligni-

[1]Ch. 1:28,29.

ty" (Moffat's translation). We are not to suppose that this is a correct matter-of-fact description of men the world over, but it sets forth the truth of the manner in which sin brings forth its own punishment in him who commits it. Is even this punishment remedial in intent and in effect? We think so.

IV. THE MEANING OF JUSTIFICATION.

In view of what has been said on this subject at various points in the earlier pages of this work it is unnecessary to add more than a few words in the present connection.

It is to be remembered that *justification* is a legal or forensic term meaning *acquittal by court procedure*. It is fittingly used to represent in figure the Christian experience of salvation. First, because the formal laws of any country are attempts on the part of the people to incorporate in definite form the moral principles of their life—and the Christian life is an attempt to fulfill the highest morality. And, secondly, because the Christian consciousness of deliverance from impotency in the presence of moral evil and its attendant ills to a sense of moral freedom and power is, on its emotional side, like the experience of one who stands before a tribunal of justice with the fear of condemnation in his soul but leaves it with a feeling of freedom and exultation because the court has acquitted him. But as soon as the figure of speech is made to stand for actual matters of fact, so that God is said to reckon a man righteous, when he is not, because he had, correspondingly, reckoned Jesus guilty, when he was not, then a species of legalism and of dead formalism takes the place of a living faith in the good will and graciousness of

a holy God to whom one yields himself in humble service and with whom he has fellowship in the purpose of his life.

God is "a God that justifies the ungodly"— that is, he is a God who delivers the ungodly from their ungodliness by making them like himself in character, by making them righteous. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross is not a device for securing on behalf of men a formal acquital at the divine tribunal but it is the impartation to men of Jesus' very self in the perfect righteousness of his character. He sought to make men righteous positively and really and not merely in a legal sense. It is not the aim of the Christian Gospel to lead men to dispense with constant confession of sin and constant repenting unless they be at the same time released from constant sinning. *Divine justice does not deliver men from the consequences of wrong doing in any other way than by delivering them from the doing of the wrong.* That is to say, justification and sanctification—if for a moment we may use these much abused terms—are the same thing considered from different points of view. The act of divine justification is the divine act of bringing men into the pure, holy, sinless, self-denying, vicarious life which the Christian believes to be the life of Jesus Christ. He saves men from punishment only by saving them from sin. And his act is the act of God. And this one century-long activity of his is just God's own graciousness in operation in the world of men.

When this act of God is called forgiveness, nothing different from the foregoing is meant. But when we speak of forgiveness attention is drawn more particularly to the gracious and tender mind which is God's own mind toward men, the mind that persists in pursuing them in kindness, even if it be at times with severity, till they are

reconciled to the holy life of God. *In a word—to be made God-like in character, to be made Christ-like, that is justification, forgiveness, sanctification, reconciliation.* This and this alone it is the purpose of the Christian Gospel to bring to mankind.

V. THE MEANING OF ATONEMENT

We shall conclude this chapter with a suggestion of the more detailed treatment which this profound and engrossing subject merits. Our interpretation of atonement must be a continuation of our exposition of guilt, punishment, and justification and be set forth in the same spirit.

The theme recalls to our mind the depth and the persistency, through ages, of the human consciousness of an opposition in our deeds or an antagonism in our spirit toward the call of the higher life and the deep pain which is thereby produced in our hearts. Men have always felt that there is something wrong with them. Rude "primitive" people offer gifts to higher beings to avert their dreaded anger. Highly refined and sensitive "modern" peoples have their own serious misgivings about themselves and seek by some kind of severe self-culture and self-devotion to make amends for personal failures and misdeeds. All men, high and low, are ready to rely for support and betterment upon some great friend who will do for them what they cannot do for themselves and lift them to a worthier life. Something of this character is the source of the ancient practice of offering sacrifices and the prayers of the broken and contrite heart when it offers itself to God today. What wonder, then, if those who came under the power of the matchless personality of Jesus

often spoke of the vicariousness he manifested in his devotion to men to the death, as if he were the great priest of humanity who offered himself in sacrifice to God in behalf of mankind. But we miss their secret, and his also, if we hurl this whole subject into a sea of legalism, make of his sufferings a punishment in substitution for ours, in order that by means of a legal transfer of guilt to him there may be a legal transfer of his righteousness to us. The great secret of the Christian faith is, the rather, that Jesus' lifelong work of self-giving for men is to be perpetuated forever in the life of everyone who believes in him. This is the one limitless, never-ceasing act of atonement for sin.

Inasmuch as the tragic death of Jesus disclosed as nothing else would have done, so far as we can see, the quality of his whole career it has been called *the* atoning deed. The long story of the efforts men have made to justify this belief shows that two forms of representation have prevailed. According to the one the death of Jesus was a priestly act in which the real blood of Jesus was effective in putting away the sins of men because it was really carried into the presence of God to propitiate him. While the epistle to the Hebrews was an attempt to detach its readers from the Jewish legal priestly system, it has been made, in spite of the fact that the author asserts that Jesus offered himself "through the eternal spirit" and that Christians, freed from bondage to the whole priestly system, are also to "offer sacrifices of praise" by "confession of his name" and by "good works"—it has been made, I say, to support a system of external sacrifices. The Catholic church has mainly clung to this view. The Protestant churches have commonly preferred to use the

conceptions of human government as the forms in which the Christian atonement can be best set forth, because these come much nearer to the profound Protestant conviction that the Christian faith is moral in its fundamental character. Here again, unfortunately, the letter has so often been substituted for the spirit. Forms of government can at best only symbolize the moral transformation in which the Christian atonement truly consists.

In keeping with our exposition of the terms *guilt, punishment, justification* we will now say that the Christian atonement is a movement in the hearts of men which brings them into unity of moral purpose and life with Jesus Christ, that is, with God. To understand it we must enter into the life experiences of One who bore in his spirit the sense of the wrong, the degradation and the woe into which men come by sin and yet bore it in the confidence that the very sin itself opens the door to a higher life, that is, if men come to know the power of vicariousness, whose action is called forth by the fact of sin. The self-giving of Jesus Christ is an act that has been, and is still, projecting itself through succeeding ages in the very same self-giving activity on the part of his followers. It becomes one great eternal act of his, fulfilling its meaning ever more fully as the race goes forward on its course. I see in this one supreme, eternal act the truth that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath placed in us the word of reconciliation". But that "word of reconciliation" placed in us is not to be identified with any set form of words or doctrines. It is the living word, the presonal life, the onward movement of our spirits ever announcing to our own consciousness and to all men by our conduct

toward them that we have given ourselves to the fulfilment of the meaning of Christ's cross as the adoption on our part of the divinely revealed, but truly self-enacted law of vicarious labor and suffering to bring good out of evil.

Whenever, therefore, one travels through the valley of humiliation on account of another's misdoings and places his powers at the command of the effort to save the sinner and those whom he sins against from the moral depravity that makes such sinning a possibility, he is making atonement for sin. Christ is making it through him. He can say with Paul,[1] "I am suffering now on your behalf, but I rejoice in that I would make up the full sum of all that Christ has to suffer in my person on behalf of the church, his body." If Paul is right, as I think he is, then all who profess the salvation of Christ are to look forward to offering themselves all the way through life as an atonement for men's sins. I know of no other atonement than this.

[1]Col. 1:24

CHAPTER X

THE SAVED COMMUNITY

We often meet the question, Is the Christian consciousness of a deliverance (as it is called) from the lower life to the higher capable of becoming a universal human experience? May it be carried so far forward into the life of mankind that at last the entire race will come permanently under its sway? May it be made the bond of a united humanity and therewith a deliverance from all man-made evils?

Let us put the question a little more concretely:—Among all peoples there have emerged certain group forms of the community life—family, school, civil state, court of justice, industrial and commercial order—which tend to become permanent. These are not products purely of some individual's inventive genius but have grown up so gradually and almost imperceptibly as to seem native to the race. While each of such institutions occupies an area peculiarly its own, they have a complementary and mutually influential relation to one another. Persons may be active in several of them at the same time. Our question is:—Does the religious faith called Christian tend to preserve and enhance or to dissolve these?

Theories on the subject have generally held that the Christian faith produces an institution of its own, an institution that is peculiarly sacred, as over against these secular orders, and that this heavenly institution is bound to endure while the others are of inferior worth and must

pass away. This theory rests on the supposition that the Christian faith arises not out of natural conditions and qualities native to the human spirit but issues from action proceeding from a different, an alien, realm.

If this be the true view, then the Christian faith is essentially unworldly, its highest virtues are those that signify the complete renunciation of the world and its aim is to divert the minds of men from the natural order of life and of the world and fix their attention entirely on the sacred order opposed to the secular. The upshot of such a view would be the limitation of the practice of the true faith to a few chosen spirits among men to whom this peculiar power has been given. All others, who are incapable of making the great renunciation, are doomed to a partially Christian, semi-secular life in the earth with the hope, perchance, of entering at last upon the holy, truly Christian experience, but only after death. In keeping with this, the natural course of the world must be expected to tend toward a final anarchy which could be swept away only by a universal cataclysm of nature.

But there is another view, the view, namely, that the faith of the Christian is just such a faith as might be expected to arise in the breasts of such men as we are by our nature and in such a world as ours. According to this view, the Christian faith would be in harmony with and truly express those native qualities of ours that enable us to live together in peace and to exercise our natural powers to the fullest extent. This faith would be seen to bring its possessor into ever more intimate contact with the world of men, into ever richer sympathy with their common hopes and longings, their sense of achievement and defeat, and to impart to all the secular pursuits of men

a sacred character. Moreover, it would tend to transform the hard, unfeeling and conscienceless material world into a holy temple like unto that temple of the human spirit out of which the faith itself emerged. The saved community would be here and, therefore, hereafter. Does the Christian faith in this manner tend to unify mankind in a saved community?

At the outset it must be frankly admitted that, if we make our appeal to the historian, his reply sounds far from unequivocal. The Christian faith sprang up at its beginning out of the bosom of the Jewish church-nation, but it soon became a pronounced heresy and broke away to form a separatist group. Ere long it was found spreading rapidly among other peoples, but Christians were so exclusive and so intolerant toward other religions that they were often known as "the atheists." A common watchword among them seems to have been, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate." In many Christians, instead of a deep appreciation of the dominant ethnic institutions and orders of life around them, there appeared an ardent hope and expectation of a "day of wrath" when all those institutions of the "ungodly" would pass away in the great "fire". Moreover, the Christians soon became much divided among themselves. Not even the formation of the Catholic Church, organized upon the basis of a creed required of all its members, and supported by the imperial Roman government, could avail to bind all Christians together in a single institution or to prevent the rise successively of powerful bodies of dissidents. Thus has it continued down to the present time. We have hundreds, if not thousands, of organizations bearing the Christian name, but each having its own

system of belief and of activity differing from all the others. In the field of politics there seem to be phenomena of like import as regards the influence of the Christian faith. For many a political revolt seems traceable to the uprising of the Christian spirit against the established order.

Over against all this there stands the fact that the adherents of the Christian faith have constantly held before themselves, as an ideal in prospect, the union of all Christians at last in one great community of spirit, a community reaching even beyond the boundry line between the living and the dead and continuing forever. But it remains a question whether there be resident in the Christain faith the power to achieve this end. The doubt is particularly suggested by the great pall of darkness that hangs over the ideal just mentioned. I refer to the belief sponsored by the great outstanding Christian creeds and confessions in their doctrine of a final dual destiny of the human race. Why should such a prospect, so fatal to the high hope of a unified humanity, have held its place so firmly in the minds of Christians for so long a time—why, if it be not because we all know that the initiative of the individual is irrepressible and he can never remain content with any fixed order of life. In order to maintain possession of his own soul he must break through the restraints imposed upon him by any community that has been or is to be. The rebel among men is sure to appear and, if he be in the wrong, are not the consequences to himself irreversible?

Or shall we say that it is in the continual oscillation between the daring of the individual and the conservatism of the institutionalized community that the process of

human betterment makes its way onward? Shall we say that the community of the *saved* is, in one aspect of its life, the community *to be saved* by the dissenting individual. For him, at any rate, it often comes about that the so-called saved community is that *from* which he seeks to be saved. Our question then is: In what relation does the Christian faith stand toward these contending forces?

I. THE PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN PROGRESS EVERYWHERE.

1. It will facilitate the discovery of an answer to our question if for a moment we review the attitude we must assume toward the sins of the individual, on the one hand, and his virtues, on the other.

The sins of an individual are always judged by the observer on the basis of his relation to some community to which he seems to pertain, but an observer who is himself within this same community will judge his act differently from one who is without it. In the former instance the individual's act which the observer calls a sin is viewed as a violation of the constituent character of the community to which both the sinner in question and the oberver belong. In the instance of the outsider it is viewed as expressing the quality of the life of that very community. In the former instance again, the aim is to protect the community against the violence of the individual, to justify the character of the community by condemning the act of the man and, in the end, to save the community at the man's cost. But in the latter of the two instances there is an effort to erect a bulwark against the assaults

of the community to which the man pertains and to justify the claim of the observer that the community of which he himself is a member possesses a life of a higher type than the other. In this form of the issue the question is, as to the relative worth of two contrasted communities. We shall find that a true judgment of the matter must embrace both of these views.

When the individual sinner is viewed as the sole sinner in the case, his act is considered within a narrow range. He is treated as being under supreme obligation to the community against which he seemed to have sinned. His place within the community he owes to the action of the community itself. From the community emanates the law of his life and when he violates that community's will its authority over him comes into action in a fitting manner. It seeks to save itself either by reducing him to subjection to its will or by excluding him from any further share in its life. The offense he has committed may be charged to his own independent self-will and be counted, therefore, an act of rebellion. In that case his independence must be overthrown, lest he infect other members of the community and it be thereby destroyed. Or, by excluding him from its membership, the community leaves him free to pass over into some other community from whose life his act really proceeded, if such a community can be found. Ancient and modern jurisprudence alike abound in illustrations of this view. Achan and his family are destroyed in order to save Israel from wrath. By the counsel of the Jewish Caiaphas Jesus is executed, "that the whole nation perish not". King Charles I of England is beheaded as a traitor to the nation in the interest of national deliverance. The Roman Church pronounced

heresy a capital crime because it violated the unity of the Church and endangered its existence. Josiah Royce, our pre-eminent American philosopher, seems to find no other ground of the need of atonement than the treason of the individual toward the community. According to these practices, it is the community that is originally holy and worthful, and it alone has the inherent right to live. The individual's rights are derivative because it is only within the community he has any rights whatsoever. He who, like Cain, belongs to no community has no rights and his life may be taken away with impunity. According to the point of view, then, of the inside observer, unless we quite misread the story of the community life of humanity, it is the recalcitrancy or the self-assertion of the individual, with this consequent *set* toward innovation, that repeatedly threatens to frustrate all attempts to make any established order of life whatsoever permanent.

When we take the standpoint of the observer who is outside that community in which the sinner in question has held a membership, we meet a different aspect of the matter. If he disapproves the deed, there is a tendency on his part to see in it just such a deed as might be expected of the member of such a community. The array of forces resident in that community comes to light in that particular deed. The community then comes under the same sentence as the individual who is a member of it. But if the outside observer approves the deed, he tends thereby to regard the man as belonging in reality to the same community as himself and as holding nominal allegiance to the other. In any case there is a community reference, but the question always arises: Is the community from which the individual seems to have sprung the commun-

ity to which he now really belongs? Does he really belong to any community at all? Or does he belong solely to himself?

If at last we turn to ask of the sinner himself an interpretation of his action, we get further light. If he joins in the condemnation other members of the community have pronounced on his deed, he declares thereby that he has now come into a real participation in the life of the community that was offended by his action. But if he continues to approve it he thereby declares himself outside the community. In either case he will experience a feeling of pain—in the former case pain at the thought that he has violated the principle of the community's existence and at the same time the worth of his own personality, and, in the latter case, pain at the thought that the community to which he has been hitherto attached has proved false to the higher principle of life that he had symbolized in his deed. This begets in him the will to find or to create a community of whose character his deed may be regarded as a true expression. In any event, whenever we appeal to the judgment of the supposed sinner, there is found a reference to a community to which he now belongs or will belong. But this is by no means the whole truth of the matter.

In the mind of the individual concerned there is always a self-reference. It comes to light when we raise the question as to the source of his deed. To that question there is one answer that finally puts all other answers out of court —"I did it". Even though he may point to other individuals or a community of them from which the impulse, or the suggestion, or the habit that eventuated in this particular act proceeded, nevertheless the final verdict of the

self-judged is always, "I did it". This, I think, is the most significant fact in the story of human life. The supreme court that exercises jurisdiction over the individual holds its sessions within his own soul. This means, of course, that at that same instant he is sitting in judgment on the community whose character is reflected in his deed, be it good or bad. But at that point he seems to have projected his personality beyond the range of individuality. Here we perceive the high prerogative claimed by the individual and there seems no way open for us to refute his claim.

2. With the aid of the foregoing, rather apocopated, discussion we may now attempt to state briefly the principles that govern the whole course of human betterment, whether in the individual or in the group.

We begin with that which to each of us is the most truly known because it is the most immediately known, namely, the self-awareness of the man. He knows himself as he knows no other, the knowing subject and the known object being one and the same. He directs himself as he directs no other—self-direction it is that makes man MAN. His experiences are his as they are no other's. Hence his deeds are his as they are no other's. In very truth every new deed of his is a new fact in the world. That particular deed—I refer not merely to its outer detail but to its inward character as well—was never committed by him or anyone else before. Even when he joins with others in an act that is counted an act in common to all concerned in it, his own part in it takes on, to our view, a peculiar quality the moment we survey it in its ultimate character as a spiritual process. It is not identical with the part played by any other. Even if we may say that he gathers up in himself an inheritance acquired by

the activities of his ancestral family, tribe and nation, still the character of that inheritance is altered by his every deed. The man's very soul is his own as it is no other's. Were it not so, the history of humanity would present simply a monotonous repetition of commonplaces and life would lose its interest and its upward spring. The very possibility of spiritual progress—and, for that matter, of deterioration as well—lies in the spontaneity and initiative of the individual.

In the next place, we must point out that the very personal consciousness of the individual proves itself in the life of the race to be more than an exclusive personal possession. The individual is more than an individual. The impulse to communicate one's secret to the world is universal and irresistible. If his possession remains peculiar to himself, if it be incommunicable, if it cannot be circulated among men so as to become the common property of all, it is really worthless to its supposed owner. He who can reserve to himself the quality he prizes the most, he who is unable to communicate his best has, so far as we can tell, nothing of value to give. The whole story of human life becomes the story of the manner in which the human creative personality has wrought toward the transformation of the race by seeking to impart to every member of it his own very selfhood in all its worth. Every new-born child finds itself in the bosom of a community each member of which is seeking to convey to him the wealth of the intellectual, aesthetic and moral heritage into which he himself has been born, *plus* the increment which each one of these members has brought to its life in his own personality. Thus also the religious life of men is marked by the

presence in it of *types* which have appeared where geographical, racial, intellectual and other contacts and intimacies have made it possible for temporarily separable communities to arise. Each member of the group finds himself borne up by the accumulated experiences of preceding generations. These are embodied in the modes of thought, speech, and action which are closely woven into the organism of the society in which he moves from his earliest days. Without explicit recognition on his part of the play of these forces on his susceptibilities, he has been put into possession of aptitudes altogether beyond the capacity of the man who has no such environment. It is thus that types of religion arise.

When the religious reformer stands up to denounce customs or doctrines in vogue among his people, the very protest he makes against the continuance of the objectionable features of their life takes on a character which the community itself has been active in making. His protest is such a protest as only a member of that community could offer. John the Baptist's warning of a coming judgment on the Jews had a basis in the spiritual life of the Jewish community of which the preacher himself had been a member. Luther's attack upon the sale of indulgences would not have occurred but for the permeation of his mind with high spiritual intuitions which had an established place in the bosom of the same Catholic community whose sin he was denouncing. Rogers Williams' successful protestation against the imposition of legal disabilities upon people holding certain religious beliefs would not have arisen, so far as we can tell, but for his presence in a community that had suffered for conscience' sake. And thus it is always. But this is not to say that the

reformer is wholly a product of the community whose life he has shared. Far from it. Our statement means that the individual who makes an advance beyond the traditions of the community of which he has been a member hitherto makes *such* an advance as the life of that community and no other has made possible for him. *But no man is wholly a member of any concrete community that is now or ever has been.* There is for him a more vital and more intimate relation than can be found in the concrete human community.

3. It is to be noted that this inward and necessary relation of the individual to the community carries with it no implication of a disparagement of his worth but rather an enhancement. The isolated man is a savage and he who seeks to isolate himself from his fellow men tends toward savagery. The savage is a menace to the civilized community and must be tamed by the communication of its qualities to him. The devotee to the monastic life pure and simple is a promising candidate for savagery. Oppositely, the practical acceptance of the view offered in these pages exalts the individual. On the one hand, it throws his soul open to those mighty spiritual currents that course through the lives of multitudes of other men and that enrich his soul by making it heir to their wealth. And, on the other hand, it opens to him an avenue to the exercise of a boundless influence, in that it enables him to penetrate the souls of others with the peculiar power of his own personality. His life is no longer shut up within the narrow confines of an individual selfhood but goes on in the lives of countless multitudes.

The great man is not he who stands aloof from others, pronounces his judgment on them and claims for himself

a character possessed by no other. But the great man is he who is able to comprehend and unify in his own soul the love and longing, the ambitions and hopes, the fears and strivings of a community of people whose man he is because they find their true soul revealed in him. Nations honor their great men because they see in the grandeur of such persons their own true worth *prophetically set forth.* They visualize in these the fulfillment in themselves of potentialities undiscovered until their great man appeared. In the end, therefore, it is the *great man* that makes the nation great. For he prefigures to them all the quality of that good toward which their life must move if it is not to be lost.

The same is true of religions. The great religion, the religion with a glorious future is not the faith that makes men recluses and exalts them to mountain peaks of experience that the multitudes cannot share. But the great religion is the religion in which there is disclosed a personality in whom the whole world of humanity can find its destiny, a personality that seeks to embrace all other personalitites in his aims and activities, so that in him mankind discovers the principle of its own unity and peace. The great religion is the religion of the Great Community that finds its life in the Great Individual.

But who is the great individual? Not he whose spiritual worth, whose inner wealth, whose personality can be described as merely the product of the spiritual processes which were at work in the lives of the generations of men who went before him. Nor can the great individual be regarded as merely the unification of all these processes in a single self-contained career. For in accepting either of these definitions we should be guilty of overlooking the

true character of that activity by virtue of which this inclusion and unification of processes that are now in the past was effected. The great individual is he who is most truly creative, he who unites in himself vast inheritances from the past only as supplying a footing, a point of departure, for an enterprise which springs out of his own initiative, an enterprise that was never another's in the sense or manner in which it is his, an enterprise which, as it is progressively achieved, reveals to other persons the worth of potencies hitherto dormant in their own natures but capable of realization in them all. The great individual is more than the heir of the great community from whose bosom he issued. He is the creator of the new community. If, then, the community in general represents the principle of continuity in human life, if it is the conservator of past achievement, the individual represents the principle of progress. He is the Maker of the New.

It is but another way of saying the same thing if we declare that the individual who is only heir to the past is lost. He needs to be saved from that very community whose life is continued in his own. To be nothing more than it has made him is to be only a product—a sort of *thing*. He must discover a mission and deliver a message which has never been another's. And in giving himself to this selfdiscovered mission, in uttering the message which is a new and living word, he commits himself to the task of making this most cherished wealth of his the property of the world of men.

The experience of salvation and the activity of saviourhood are inseparable. Only in giving one's self *to* the world is one saved *from* the world. It is only in the commitment of one's self to the world, only in the giving of

one's self to all men, only in the projection of one's self into the life of mankind, that one finds deliverance from the evil that is in the world. For in order to escape from evil, it is necessary that a man carry out into the world the new good of which he has become possessed in such a way that it becomes the bond of a new community and finds enhancement there.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AS THEY BEAR UPON THE QUESTION OF A COMMUNITY SALVATION

1. Our first affirmative touching this point is:—*The Christian faith is identical with the spirit of loyalty to a historic figure of the past who is at the same time the ideal figure of the future.* This figure bears the name of Jesus Christ.

If the literature that registers the thoughts of professed Christians throughout their age-long productivity is a safe index to the Christian mind wherever found, then it is certain that the first outstanding fact of its history is the uniqueness of Jesus Christ among men. According to the Christian estimate, in the list of human names he has no equal and no rival. The utterances of personal piety, the liturgies of public worship, the speculations of Christian thinkers, the formal creeds and confessions speak all with one voice here. To tell exactly how this came about, to enumerate and characterize the influences at work in it, may be quite beyond the power of the historian, but there stands out clearly the fact of his indisputable supremacy for all who bear his name. The supreme worth of the personality of Jesus Christ in relation to the solution of the problem of human life, in the definition of its highest aim,

and in the impartation of the energy necessary to achieve it is a dogma of the Christian spirit. No matter what new outlooks on life, what new virtues and graces, what new hopes of betterment may have come to Christians with the progress of the centuries, they have attributed all these to him and found in him the highest incentive to their fulfilment. This unique transformation of a human career, lived under definite limitations in the past, into an ideal of life regarded as valid for all time to come and within any environment whatsoever, is the most remarkable fact, I say, in Christian history and, perhaps, in all history. We are here simply pointing to the fact, we are not trying to justify it.

Every student of Christian history has observed how, as the decades and centuries of Christian experience subjected this confidence in him to a critical testing, new predicates of his worth were heaped on one another until the "good teacher" and "friend of sinners" became known as "very God of very God". Nor can it be denied that this was, at least in part, an outcome of the growing realization of the meaning of his historic career. In fact his name has become synonymous with the principle of betterment that is operating everywhere in the life of humanity and at the same time, as men have hoped, in the universe of which they are denizens. And this is to say that the Christian faith is the human self-committment to a supreme personality in whom humanity and its universe find their meaning and their consummation and that the character of that personality is disclosed progressively in the evolving career of Jesus Christ throughout the Christian centuries. And, again, this is to say that the hope of mankind

lies in a universal participation in the quality of his personality.

2. When Jesus created in the breast of his first diciple a faith in his personal worth he projected into the life of humanity an impulse that seems bound to issue in the formation of a community as broad as the life of the race.

There is no clear evidence that Jesus had in mind the formation of a regular institution for the propagation of his teachings or that he sought to provide for the creation of such an institution by his followers. But, after the manner of strong personalities of all times, he drew about him a group of people whose bond of union lay in their common attachment to himself. What in particular it was that drew them to him they were probably as little able as other men who attached themselves to a hero to explain. Our New Testament is in part a record of their attempt to do so. But the writers of these little works would probably have been prompt to admit that their attempt was only a partial success. But, at any rate, we can gather this, that they believed they found in him the desired interpretation of the way to the better life. Whatever the symbols they may have used to express this, he is always at the heart of them. If that better life was to come by means of a great cataclysm and a final destruction of evil, he it was, they said, that should appear to pronounce the judgment and assure its execution. If that better life was to be propagated by the blood of its martyrs, then he was the great Martyr by whose blood they were all able to pay the price of loyalty. If in the end all his people were to be sinless, that was to come through seeing him as he really is. If an inward divine spirit was to fashion their

minds alike and bind them into an inner unity, this spirit was to be just Jesus himself living and working in them. Thus, through their common relation to him, there grew up the mutual appreciation that was shown in their love of meeting together and that bound them in a firm union of heart and effort. Here was begotten the confidence that wherever this personal attitude toward him could be established in human hearts there would be found the longed for community of goodness and peace, the Kingdom of God. This is wholly in keeping, in fact, identical with the great law of the community everywhere. As the divergent tastes and wishes of the children in the family home are subdued and harmonized by a beloved parent's affection for them all, as the conflicting views of the students of a great master are remolded and severally made factors in the making of *a larger* philosophy of life for them all through the alluring genius of a constructive mind, and as the strifes between the soldiers of an army are allayed and calmed in the presence of a great commander; just so the hope of a united humanity lies in the advent and constant presence in it of a personality in whom each and all can find an ideal object to which all other aims are to be made subject and tributary. Always and everywhere among men it is the great individual that founds the great community. The point is—the great individual is always the center of a community's life, a community that reflects the quality of his greatness. This is the law of the community and the story of the progress of the Christian faith illustrates it abundantly.

But it is not proved hereby that this faith really cherishes in the hearts of men as supreme the principle which is to prove itself competent to create the perfect and all-

inclusive community. Of this, of course, it is absurd to ask for absolute proof, since the real proof of the worth of a principle of action is gradually evolved in the living practice of it. The corollary of the confidence that one has discovered the highest principle of our self-conscious life is a devotion of one's energies to the effort to gain for it a world-wide acceptance. That alone can be shown to be absolutely valid which is universally in control.

Our question now becomes, What seems to be the outstanding characteristic of this ideal personality we call Jesus Christ that gives us the right, as we believe, to look for the growing realization of the hope to found a universal human community through the attraction of his personality? There have been answers given to this question in the past. For example, it has been said that God has foreordained the absolute lordship of Jesus over the race. He is to be the final Judge of mankind. Or it has been said that he must be supreme because he is the only God Incarnate. But both of these carry us to an unknown realm outside the horizon of our conscious life. They leave us strangers to his inner self, which is the matter of highest moment to us now. Instead of turning in either of these directions, we must turn the rather to the concrete personality as he is portrayed in the earliest portraits we have of him and the gradual completion of the figure with the growing life of the Christian people. This, of course, involves a vast field of study. We must here content ourselves with a suggestion or two.

3. *This idealization of Jesus by Christians is a reflex of his own idealization of the human personality for its own sake.*

There is a tendency universally among men to idealize the new-born child. This power of idealization is the secret source of the new-found joy of its parents and of all the loving care and semi-divine worship that is paid to it. It is only the hard knocks coming from the common failures that the child makes in its life that leads us to reduce our hopes to the level of the commonplace. But he who can maintain the high idealization of the child after it has become a man and after the man has cruelly disappointed the anticipations that gave a divine sacredness to his life; he who gives himself unwaveringly and unstintedly to that fallen man because the image of a perfected career he once perceived in the child is still to be discerned in the man—the man, I say, who can do this is the true hero who is able to gather to himself the loyalities of men everywhere. Moreover, he who can still perceive in a beaten and baffled man, in a man whose form is scarred by his own misdeeds, an ideal aim still struggling for self-expression and fulfillment, sees in the very sins and errors of that man a powerful reminder of an ideal that must not be allowed to perish. And, therefore, this hero of ours sees in that man an object to which he may give himself in the full plentitude of his powers, a personality with whom he may establish a deeper fellowship because of the very fact that he seems to have failed to find himself. Right here we see the main lineaments of the portrait of Jesus in the Gospels.

We meet constantly with his refusal to see in men only that which they seem to others to be. It is reflected in his rebukes and denunciations as well as in his words of promise and comfort, in his exposure of hypocrites as well as in his welcome to the religious outcast. We see it all the way

through his career to the point where he lays himself down on his cross. And this is the thing, mind you, which has been distinctive of his character as that has been interpreted by successive generations of Christians. They have conceived the presence of just such a personality in a growing life of multitudes of men, a personality of whom each one who feels the power of the portrait says, "He loved me and gave himself for me." In consequence there has sprung up with ever-growing energy in the Christian mind the conception of a world of men to each one of whom it is his right to give himself in the full communion of his own personality. This attempt to come into another's life with the secret power of one's own carries with it at the same time an accession of confidence in one's own personal worth.

This very communicability of one's self to another would be meaningless did it not at the same time make the possessor of it receptive to the action of the other. For apart from this receptivity toward the other the appreciation of the other's worth, of which we have spoken, would fall away. There rises, therefore, for the Christian believer the vision of a world where every man, in all the plentitude of his power, is a member of a community that has the riches of the universe at its disposal, a community also in which all the members are both benefactors and beneficiaries of all. This would be a community in which all persons have become sacred and the world of which they are denizens has become a sanctuary, all its forces being contributory to one supreme end. Where is that world to be found and where shall we find that happy community?

The traditional answer to the question is familiar to us all—In heaven, in the world to which we go after death. But when the question is pressed further, Who are to be the denizens of that world? The traditional answer is, Not all, but only the good. And when we ask still further, Are these good all perfectly good? the answer is, Yes, all are perfect and there is no better world or better state to be found. If we ask yet one more question, Is there no betterment possible for those who are excluded from that world? and meet a reply in the negative, then we feel that that perfect community and the perfect world in which it is to live are less than Christian, since that idealization of personality which is the very soul of the Christian faith is confessedly abandoned by the members of that supposedly perfect community. We do not for that reason abandon our ideal but turn rather to the effect of the ideal that comes to light in the Christian estimate of personality, progressively wrought out among the dust and swirl of our common life here on the earth.

III. THE ISSUE—IN WHAT MANNER DOES THE CHRISTIAN FAITH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF THE LONGED-FOR RACE COMMUNITY OF THE HIGHER ORDER?

The answer to be offered here can be given only in outline and by way of mere suggestion. We shall put it at first in a somewhat dogmatical form. *By virtue of its estimate of personality the Christian faith is a radically reconstructive force in those relations of man to man we call social. For that very reason it is constitutive of the better community and works toward the permanency of the human community life.*

In our present discussion we have not been led to the discovery of a principle of the community life that can be called exclusively Christian, that is, a principle that operates only within the historic Christian community; but, on the contrary, we have been led to see in the Christian faith a principle in command that is the true basis of human communities wherever found, even if in many ways those communities present a contradiction of it. The distinctive thing about the Christian faith is that this principle becomes dominant because there it gets explicit recognition.

For this reason we shall not look for some distinct and peculiar institution as, in contrast to all others, the divinely ordered embodiment of this principle and therefore to continue as a divine institution for all time. Churches, or denominations of Christians, have sought to establish this very claim for themselves but they have all been subjected, one by one, to the processes of dissolution that come by way of division in their interpretation and practice of life. And this is not to be really regretted, though it may seem like the dissolution of the Christian ideal. For it tends to prevent that stagnation of the power of intelligence and will that comes out of the depersonalizing influence of all fixed forms either of thought or of action. That is to say, the growth of dissent in any field of human interest whatsoever may be properly regarded as tending to bring to clearer recognition the principle that is most truly basic to the human community wherever found, and therefore tends to the preservation and enhancement of the community itself. We may even go further and say that it is by no means certain that any organization or institution that is regarded as distinctive-

ly religious, in contrast to the so-called secular institution, is to be looked upon as permanently necessary. May it not be that that higher purpose of self-giving to all others, the vicariousness seen in Jesus Christ associated, as it always must be, with a receptivity toward all others, will become so dominant a factor in the so-called secular institutions that they will be the true churches, the congregations of the faith, the saved communities that in their inner and outer progress are ever building humanity into one all-inclusive community.

We may take a brief and hurried glance at the manner in which the Christian faith builds up certain forms of association that have endeared themselves to men by their ministry everywhere.

We begin with the natural family. Roman Catholicism regards complete membership in the family life as detrimental to the highest good and as representing a plane of life lower than the celibate, which is the truly spiritual, because the physical relations involved in the making of a family are detrimental to the aim of absolute devotion to the spiritual and divine. But if the sense of the supremacy of personal worth, characteristically Christian, permeates and controls the action even of physical affection, then the physical instincts cease to be merely physical and come under subordination to the ultimate aim of producing true, noble, eternal personality. The natural affection of the man and the woman for each other becomes the love which is identical with mutual self-commitment to the highest end. Thus the Christian spirit erects the chief bulwark of the home and the happiness that springs up in the home life. The children by their coming reveal to their parents a worthier destiny than could be attained

without them. In the pursuit of that common end their native inequalities or antipathies are outgrown and each parent becomes in body and spirit the source of ever new virtues that make their permanent residence in the home.

In the same way the faith exalts the children. For the parents, beholding in each of them a future personality filled with the beauty and the power of Jesus Christ and fulfilling in the world a destiny than which there can be no higher, cannot treat those children of destiny as mere subjects of a despotic will or as irresponsible things to be allowed to run at large with no sense of their obligation to a supreme will and no knowledge of their capacity to follow its behests. That profound self-respect which the Christian parent feels he extends to his children and this leads him to seek to inspire rather than compel, to inculcate in them aspiration and initiative rather than mere submission or contentment and thus to encourage them to become in their turn constituents in the building up of the home. Each child is encouraged to make its contribution to a higher home life that may become ideal for all would-be communities. Here all mutually serve and are served, all suffer and rejoice together, bear one another's burdens and share one another's forgiveness. Thus each family aims at becoming the prototype of the family of man yet to appear in its glory.

The influence of the Christian faith in relation to the civil community which arose in independence of historically Christian forces comes in for consideration at this point. Does the Christian spirit operate separately from civil communities, and does it tend to a depreciation of these or the reverse? The civil community is the family writ large. Its development followed two main directions.

Either the autocratic spirit of the heads of ancient families was continued in the larger order or the spirit of mutual fellowship in the family was further developed in the civil state. These two types of government have been in unceasing conflict. It cannot be said that either has been destitute of good. The antagonism between them is the antagonism between the lesser and the greater good. It is only when the lesser fails to develop into the greater good and is therefore set in opposition to it that it becomes an evil, a violation of the fundamental principle of all good living.

Loyalty to the organized forms of government is the identification of one's personal good with the customs of the people accumulated through successive generations. The question of the perpetuity of a people or nation becomes the question of the maintenance of these—but more. For it may be that some one or more individuals have found, as they think, a higher good than the nation has yet made its own and that the way to that higher good must be different from any of the traditional ways. Should the people fail to discern this, and hence refuse the new way offered to it, then, supposing this new good is truly good, the nation itself is lost in respect to a life higher than its present and the only way for the discoverers of this higher good to save themselves from the nation is to create a new community in which this new good is a constituent factor. But if the people accept the new good, then it is saved by the initiative and enterprise of the individual genius. In any case the aim of the individual is to communicate his secret and make it a constituent of the community life. This is the way in which the Christian faith saves the civil community. The community be-

comes the organism through which this higher personality gives himself to the world of men. The good of all is found in that which is the good of each personality. The good of the nation is sought through the full recognition of the worth of each individual comprising it and at the same time through the recognition of the obligation of each to minister to the good of all. And the same is true of the Christian internationalism. The worth of each nation is indisputable. Individualism is essential to universalism.

The application of these principles to the industrial and commercial order is evident. Instead of the mean spirit that seeks one's gain through another's loss or that remains indifferent to another's gain, there enters the play of mutual good will and mutual ministry. A man's business or vocation, whether it be carried on by him as an individual or as a member of a corporation, is transformed from a means of gain at whatever cost to others into a means of furthering the helpful communion of man with man. The exchange of goods becomes a medium for the higher exchange of the wealth of spirit and the whole becomes a means of building up one another by individual and cooperative enterprise. In this way the Christian principle tends to the permanence and success of the business relation and to the erection of a community that is rich in all goods because the material goods are transmuted into the abiding wealth for whose sake each man lives and for whose sake he must ever seek to communicate his new-found good to all. That is, the industrial and commercial system has become a Christian church.

The outcome is similar when we turn to the administration of law. As the genius of the individual reforms the

state in the interests of the higher personality inviting all to itself, so also the courts of justice normally present the spectacle of ever progressive efforts to bring each member of the community to a higher life. Vindictiveness yields to the principle of betterment. Even in criminal jurisprudence the personality of the criminal, as well as of his victim, becomes sacred and the stripes laid upon him become no longer a mere extortion of an equivalent for a wrong done by him but a means of delivering him, as well as the other members of the community, from the evil inherent in his crime. Thus the very punishment he suffers is construable as a self-inflicted pain for the purpose of establishing in his mind, as well as in the minds of others, the supreme worth of the personality he has violated. Thus the Christian spirit becomes a firm support to the jurisprudence of a community and works for its perpetuation.

In the field of education increase of knowledge is a means of awakening in the individual his latent creativity in order that, as the teacher imparts his own very self to the pupil, the latter may impart a still richer meaning to life by making that new knowledge a means of remaking the world of men that has seemed to make him. Science and philosophy, literature and art become teachers and ministers of salvation because they become forms of communion in the wealth of the universe, which is thereby made instrumental to the fulfilment of the potencies of the human spirit. The school also becomes a church.

Thus we see that the Christian faith tends to raise up the whole community life of men never-ceasingly from baseness and weakness to refinement and strength. The natural forms of human association take on a supernatural character. The secular becomes the holy, the human

divine. The life of the countless multitudes of people becomes a true unity, a true communion of spirit with spirit, because each personality in giving himself to all creates an endless progressiveness in response to the summons of the Perfect Personality to be brought into communion with himself.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORLD TO COME

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth;
For the first heaven and the first earth are passed away,
And the sea is no more.
And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,
Coming down out of heaven from God,
Made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.
And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying,
Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,
And he shall dwell among them,
And they shall be his peoples,
And God himself shall be with them.
And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes;
And death shall be no more;
Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain,
any more:
The first things are passed away.
And he that sitteth on the throne said,
Behold, I make all things new.

Men have always given to the world a place in their religious hopes and fears. Even the crudest religions embrace some theory of the beginning or end of the world or of such portion of it as comes within their view. When men had little knowledge of its forces or of the means of controlling them, any event that was accompanied by a signal gain or loss was supposed to be the act of a higher

being with good or ill intent. Where there was no thought of a single being or power exercising control, neither was there the thought of a single system embracing all things. The dislocated, disorderly and conflicting happenings they witnessed were referred to the whims and fancies, the likes and dislikes of the gods or demons having authority over limited areas and with tempers and aims as discordant as their deeds. Security or happiness could be enjoyed only within a realm ruled by a deity friendly to its inhabitants. No great world-vision was open to the worshippers. But when men came to believe in one only God and the way was open to them to believe that the many worlds or parts of the world constituted a universe, an all-embracing world, their interest in their own happiness was inseparably joined to an interest in the character, present and future, of the whole world. Then the great question we find ourselves still asking became theirs: Is the world friendly? And the answer even of the most intelligent has been by no means always in the affirmative.

Men commonly hold their gods dearer than the world and the desire to know their deities outreaches the desire for world-knowledge. It often happens in the case of the most serious minded that the thought of God and the thought of the world are in discord, and in their moments of deepest devotion they seek to exclude the latter wholly from the area of the soul's vision. Few, indeed, can claim they have succeeded. The high ecstasy of absorption in God is to those to whom it comes a rare experience and it is soon followed by a sense of desolation. Regretfully they own, "the world is too much with us." We can say, then, as a matter of actual experience, that men have neither

happiness or misery apart from the world's impact on their minds. And why should they? The world and man are akin.

Many of the early Christians, bearing in their souls the Jewish recoil from a world whose powers had been so often used against them with destructive and almost annihilating effect, held that the only way to permanent purity and peace lay through the fiery destruction of the present evil order, with its sin and pain, and the creation of a new world of goodness and blessing—a world where Sin and Death the prince of evils, shall be no more. Later on, many of non-Jewish training found some consolation by arguing for the non-reality of the present world. The Christian faith, the religion of true enlightenment, as they said, saved men from bondage to this false world. As Jewish apocalypticists had hoped for the annihilation of the evil world by fire, so Grecian Gnostics sought its annihilation by philosophy. As the fire was supposed to be of divine origin, so also was the true philosophy. But as the one hope was bound to be disappointed, so also was the other. Men are as little able, in the end, to dispense with the worth of the world as they are with its reality. It is interesting, to say the least, to observe that our pictures of the better world to come always take on the form and the color of the present world. We find, on the other hand, that a derogatory estimate of the natural world is always associated with a derogatory estimate of the natural ways of the men whose world it is. The question remains:—Is the constitution of the world of physical nature promotive of the high quality of life which is the ideal of the Christian faith? Does the government of the universe call for the crucifixion of the good?

Over against the view that the world is friendly to the higher life of man there stand certain sombre facts. Sickness and pain, disappointment and defeat are in some measure the lot of all. Nay—they seem to become at last the sole inheritance of all. For at the end of the journey stands the figure of Death, always dreaded, always repulsive, but always the victor. We connot get reconciled to the lordship of this monster. We never cease our efforts to overcome it. At the present time we feel so keenly about the matter that every slight gain in the average length of life is carefully noted by intelligent and progressive races. Consequently, the question whether there be a life after death has constantly a serious interest for us all. Moreover, all races have persisted in believing that there is such a life even when, as in Buddhism, a pessimistic philosophy holds out the possibility of its ceasing. We recall at this point the striking words with thich Professor A. Seth Pringle-Pattison begins his lectures on Immortality delivered before the University of Edinburgh in the year 1922. They are these:—"The universality of a belief is no sufficient guarantee of its truth. Yet there is something very impressive in the unanimity with which man from the first dim beginning of his planetary history, has refused to see in death the end of his being and activities." We are compelled to push onward in our enquiry and ask whether there be a faith that forcasts for us with certainty this coming in upon us of a better world. For no world that culminates in death can be better than the present.

I. BASIS OF THE HOPE OF A LIFE AFTER DEATH

Why should this hope prove unconquerable? Why should the idea of the final extinction of the whole family

of man be repulsive? We turn for answer to the great human instincts that come to vivid consciousness in the Christian.

1. *Amid all the ceaseless changes of life we never quite lose the inner assurance that we are really superior to all change.* Though them all WE persist. After all we do not seem to find ourselves in the realm of the transient. Were it true that we belong to the things that pass, we could not be conscious of the passing. If all things seem to us to belong in the end to an unbroken and ordered unity—for this is what we all mean by saying there is a world—it is because they obtain a place in the ordered unity of our minds. We ourselves live through time and are aware that we do so. To our view observable things belong to one another, but they all belong in their totality to our minds. Our minds pertain, therefore, not to the things that are ordered in time, but to the eternal. Observe how, in one unbroken sweep of thought, we cover vast periods of time, how we forecast the future outworking of forces now present and securely base our action on the forecast, how we unite present, past and future in a single view and survey the whole in a glance. We know inwardly that we are superior to the succession. Accordingly, we are continually exercising the prophetic gift and making the future in potency ours even while it is still far away.

In the next place, *the consciousness of an unaccomplished task is ever ours.* The inner imperative that we be ever achieving the thing that lies beyond never dies down. No sooner is a given task seemingly performed than we find it extending away beyond in a new perspective and still commanding us to go forward to the completion of it. Without this, life would lose its meaning for us. The moment

our task were accomplished further life would be needless. Our task, then, must be conceived as endless. This latter consideration must be taken in connection with the former. We do not merely organize mentally a system of facts but invariably enquire after their meaning: Unto what do they point? The question of the *why*, the purpose of it all, demands answer as insistently as the question of the *what* and the *how*. But were our life to cease for ever, were it known to us that it is destined for ever to disappear, that instant it is given a place only with the things that think not and purpose not. But life, for us, always *is* meaningful. Its meaningful character increases with its progress. We must conceive ourselves to be eternal or we become nothing, nothing but things.

In the third place, *eternity of existence is the necessary predicate of our sense of personal worth.* Every actual or contemplated event is estimated by us from the point of view of its bearing upon the well-being of human persons. Will it bring them good or will it bring them ill? is the final question in all instances. All the other questions we may ask about an act or event are tributary to this one great question. The Universe is a world of human interest. For us it never simply is or is to be. Some predicate of worth or unworth must be attached to it. It is either good or evil.

There is nothing else that impresses this upon us so forcibly as the presence or the approach of death. I speak not so much of one's anticipation of death to himself as I do of the subtle but mighty play of natural affection when the life of a loved one—say, one's child—is threatened. What true mother would not give her own life any day to save the life of her child? She has found in the child a per-

sonality potentially more worthful than her own and she readily and intelligently offers up her own as in service to the other. Where is the parent who could possibly think of his child's life in a different way? It is in this estimate of another personality that truly embraces our own rather than in the estimate of one's own in its exclusiveness, that the demand of our nature for immortality manifests its power. That which does not claim our allegiance and our endeavor for ever cannot claim it at all.

2. But if death seems so unnatural when we consult the deepest longings and the inner potencies of our minds, it seems to be a natural event when we view it in connection with the regular action of the forces of the outer world. Everywhere are graves, graves. All living things are—but to die. Nature makes alive but it also kills. It was this seeming contradiction between the human self-estimate, the human estimate of all other human beings and all that can be called personal, that awoke in the minds of the rude peoples of the long ago the suspicion that some alien and evil power had come surreptitiously upon our human life, seduced it from its true purpose, degraded its inner character, and corrupted even the outer world in which man must live and find his sustenance. So profoundly did this appeal for ages to the oppressive sense of the contradiction between what we are and what we ought to be, that such an one as John Milton must write:

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

If the earth itself was once fair and beautiful and good, it has now become the wretched abode of beings as wretched as they are evil. Michael, the archangel, assures Adam that

> "Their Maker's image . . . . . then
> Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
> To serve ungoverned appetite; and took
> His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
> Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
> Therefore so abject is their punishment."

When the angel would make known to Adam the kind of world ours has become by sin,

> "Immediately a place
> Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;
> A lazar-house it seemed; wherein were laid
> Numbers of all diseased, all maladies
> Of ghastly spasm or racking torture."

Even where for a time it seemed that the earth was a place of happy beings, Adam is warned,

> "The world ere long a world of tears must weep."

Milton powerfully expressed a popular judgment—hence the impressiveness of his utterances. Death supervenes upon every form of natural pleasure. And yet, if Paradise has been lost, it is to be regained. The conviction will not down that even if the world seems now to be, or truly is, the home of sin and suffering, it is not to be so forever. There is a better world to come.

3. The confidence in the coming of that better world (whether it seem a world into which each of us must enter

when he meets the death that comes to all, or whether it be the universe revealed in the fulness of its meaning as that is to be realized in the passing ages)—this confidence, I say, is just what we mean by religious faith. Faith sees things, not as they are but as they are to be. It is the future that gives to the present its meaning. And the Christian faith is not to be represented as a power issuing from a region alien to the native instincts of our hearts or as a mysterious quality interjected into our life from without. It is truly the concreate energy of our whole being making explicit within us the assurance that the world is destined to become the home of triumphant goodness. As Tertullian said sixteen centuries ago, it is natural, in the best sense of the word, to be a Christian. None other is so truly at home in this world of nature as the Christian believer. It is his world. And there is nothing that he may suffer at its hands that can extinguish his confidence that all things in it work together for his good in the end. We are reminded of this great saying of Paul the Apostle: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollis, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

But this natural world of ours and that world to come for which we hope, are not two separated realms. Rather are they to be united in our thoughts because the present is seen to be organic to that which is to come. And if this be so, we shall not be content to express the meaning of that world in the terms that would describe the present if it were taken by itself, but we must ever seek to set forth the meaning of the present, our "na-

tural", world, in the terms of that future, that supernatural, world. The worth of that which is reposes on the worth of that which is to be.

II. THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS AND THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

The various ways in which Christian people have sought in the past to verify their hope of a blessed personal participation in a better world to come are familiar to us all. The fact of a physical resurrection of Jesus has been appealed to in substantiation of the Christian claim. The form of the argument has varied. In the appeal to the Jewish mind it was said that, by raising him from the dead and placing him on the throne of the heavens, God rewarded him for his faithfulness and assured him and his people that at a future date he would return to the earth and establish in it the longed for kingdom of righteousness and peace. In the appeal to the Greek mind it was said that his resurrection was a proof of his Incarnate Deity and, hence, of his power to impart to men the incorruptibility and immortality that pertain only to the Divine. In the appeal to the western European mind it was affirmed that his resurrection assured men of God's acceptance of his substitutionary suffering of the penalty pronounced on guilty men for their sins and thus became the basis of their faith in him.

Without discussing in detail the merits of any of these reasonings, it may be pointed out that the significant thing in them all is not the form of the argument but *the faith* for which men were seeking an evidential support. The faith survives the failure of the argument to carry conviction. The outstanding fact throughout is the

warmth, the tenderness and the strength of the confidence of Christians in the worth of the personality that came into our world in Jesus. It is the quality of this faith, rather than the arguments for its truth, that enthralls our spirits still. The personal attachment of Jesus' first disciples to him as a man preceded their ascription to him of the dignities later connected with his name. Coming into their lives as he did and filling their minds with hopes and purposes, as regards themselves, far above anything they had conceived before, it was not possible that they could survey his character in a purely objective or disinterested way. They felt their whole life and destiny so fully united to him that it was not possible for them to separate their personal hopes from their trust in him. It is not to be supposed that these people had ever consciously sought to analyze his character. True it is that, with the promptness of that intuition which is the gift of the lowly as abundantly as it is the gift of the lofty, they had discerned in him that which satisfied their deepest longing for an inspiring fellowship. But it would have been difficult, perhaps impossible, for them to tell in detail what there was in him that won their hearts. It is much the same with us even now.

Many attempts have been made to analyze the character of Jesus. These are legitimate and possibly all of them helpful. And yet, when we examine the outcome in each case, we feel constrained to confess that the secret is not out. Indeed, a specious fallacy may underlie these attempts, to wit, the fallacy that personality is a composite of many qualities. It is personality in its wholeness and its unity that impresses us. A single great virtue in a human being may win us to absolute confidence in him.

For it is the whole man we see in that single quality. One who is so distinguished in a great virtue must have the other great virtues with it. For virtues never stand alone. We shrink from the attempt to analyze the character of Jesus as one shrinks from an analysis of his mother's character. It has not been otherwise with the Christian attitude to Christ through the ages.

What those early disciples had found, then, was not simply the perfect character in Jesus that would challenge criticism during the coming centuries—true though this may be—but it was a *fellowship* they had found, a fellowship that promised to them an infinite and eternal good, so that, when the contingency of their being separated from him by their own act was suggested by him, the only possible answer of their hearts was the question, "To whom shall we go but to thee?"—truly an unanswerable question. Hence we may understand something of the horror with which the judicial murder that took him away from them filled their minds. Their whole destiny for time and eternity, which they had come to cherish with unutterable joy, was apparently swept away in that terrible hour that saw him die. With him destroyed, there was nothing left to live for.

It is only when our loved ones and our angels of mercy are taken from us that we become aware of their worth. It is always so, and it was so with them at that time. His greatness, his goodness, his holiness grew on them with the passing of the days and with the recollection of what he had said and done and suffered. The glory of a mountain height is not revealed to our eyes until we stand back at a distance from it on the plains below. It was his separation from them that revealed to them the ineffable

grandeur of the fellowship they had had with him in the days when he was so near to them, when he opened to them the scriptures and set the word of God in their hearts. It had brought them into a new fellowship with one another. It had bound them together in a new hope and a new purpose. The vision of the extension of this fellowship into all the world slowly rose before their eyes and began to fill them with rapture. He had given the vision and he would fulfill the prophecy it contained. With him they were "ready to go to prison and to death."

Was all this lost in a frenzy of despair when he was slain? It might seem so, at the first glance. But it was not so. They had been made a new company of people. Their fellowship with one another remained and it was filled with the sweetness which they had found in fellowship with him. This and their hope for the better world were found unconquered by his death. Had he not said so to them in those utterances, cryptic at the time, when he told them that the Son of Man must suffer at the hands of his foes and be put to death? Hope and confidence quickly revived as they realized his and their supremacy over the men who had slain him. The very possibility of suffering as he had done and for the same cause as he, was clothed in the garments of a holy joy. They had become heirs of a life that conquered death. His death had revealed the new meaning which Jesus had put into life. Had he not invited them to share in his death and in the triumph that was to follow? The whole of life and the whole world in which it was lived took on a new meaning for them. They had not lost the Master by death. The rather, they had truly found him. He was with them still in all the graciousness and power of a life eternal. The fellowship with him was

unbroken and unmarred. Nay—it was nearer and dearer than before. It was imperishable and would fill eternity.

It may well be that in the high ecstasy of these high exiences they were confirmed in their confidence by visions of his presence which one and another of them, or even a whole assembled company of them, enjoyed. But the reason why the visions of his presence with them again lived as an abiding consolation and assurance, whilst the visions of the presence of other departed ones died away, was that their apprehension of *his worth* to mankind was of vaster significance than a multitude of visions could be, because it came from the revelation of a personality that is indispensable and imperishable. It was "impossible that he should be holden of death." Here is the ancient disciples' faith in him and in themselves. However they might express it (for, like ourselves, they were men of their time and country, and spoke in the accepted terminology and within the area of thought current among them)—what Jesus' death brought to them was more than the issue whether the individual man Jesus was dead for all time or alive in bodily form somewhere in the spaces of the sky. The issue at stake was, whether the whole meaning of life which he had communicated to them was false, whether the God of Jesus in whom they trusted was the true and living God, whether the hope of a kingdom of grace and righteousness and truth, heading up in such a personality as his, was ever to come to fulfilment. His death of shame was turned into glory as they became inspired with the assurance that his aims were undefeated and that the holy communion of his spirit with theirs was unbroken still and must continue forever in the kingdom

that was to come. Instead of being turned back from the purpose to which he had called them, they were now fully committed to it and were confirmed in it.

The classical utterance of this faith is found in the language of Paul in his letter to the Romans:—"If we have become united in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should be no longer in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin. But if we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. For the death that he died he died unto sin once; but the life that he liveth he liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ." He who wholly dies to sin is forever alive unto God. It is not to be supposed that many of these early believers were capable of expressing their faith in this Pauline language. Their early mental environment had been far different from his. Nor is it to be supposed that the whole meaning of faith in the crucified Redeemer can now be put into these thoughts of Paul. The magnitude of this faith has been increasingly disclosed with the passing of the centuries. But already in this Pauline imagery of the death and resurrection of Jesus we are carried far beyond the kind or measure of assurance that a few broken and disconnected physical "appearances" could bestow. Be it repeated, the question of a visible physical resurrection of Jesus from the ground and of a similar physical ascension into some place in physical space, there to remain concealed from view till he come back

again; the question of his return in the same physical system to live a physical life again on this physical earth in company with those who should still be here living their physical lives; and the question whether those departed believers who had been meanwhile lying in their graves were to live on this earth once more, are not the questions that concern us now. The questions we must ask are these:—Has Jesus Christ brought into the area of our life a spiritual fellowship superior to the power of all possible eventualities, even death itself, to overthrow or weaken? Do we constantly participate in this fellowship? Is this spiritual kingdom already established in this universe of God's? Have we so entered into the mind of Jesus when he gave himself for men in death that this kingdom, in the end, means for us what it meant for him? The question of a cosmic salvation becomes therefore, the question of a destiny in which the whole universe shall be manifestly tributary to the fulfilment of a universal holy fellowship. Can we thus think of the world?

Here, then, is the point where modern science and philosophy find their affinity with the Christian faith. They are gradually arriving at a demonstration, as a practical certainty, of the truth of the faith which holds that all the forces of the physical world fulfil their purpose only when they are made instrumental to the realization of the worth of personality. Here is the very heart of the Christian view of the world. Hence death itself, as a cosmic event, must minister to that end. Salvation is cosmic. The world is the field for the manifestation of the saving grace of God.

At this point we recall the moral leaders among the men of old to whom this present life of mankind seemed so far

inferior to what it ought to be and the events that befall men in the physical world so contrary to their good that both must be the fruit of some pristine deed of evil. Mankind must have fallen from an earlier state of true goodness and the world had been subjected to corruption in consequence. Man, even in his evil state, was in kinship with the world. In these thoughts may we not discern the anticipatory working of the ideal personality and the ideal world, even though the ideal was placed in the distant past rather than in the future? And may we not find in Paul's words a deeper meaning than even Paul himself was able to put into them when he said: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our body." The movement in the spirit of man and the movement in the world around man are felt to be of the same ultimate character because a single ideal purpose is being wrought out in both. Man's struggle to gain the better life to come is an index to the meaning of all that seems so untoward in the universe. That better life is to be fulfilled in the better world to come. Men are not saved from the world or apart from it but in and with it. The redemptive process is finally cosmic.

If so, may we not then go on to say that the "groanings" of our spirit for deliverance from the evil within may be turned into the inspiration of hope and these painful longings be transformed into a holy confidence of attainment the moment one's mind turns to the love of God that came to men "in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Personality is supreme in the world by right. Even to our half-blinded minds it is plain that the universe, in the unity of its processes, must be truly ministrant to the unfolding, in all moral beings, of the character of God, the Ultimate Personality. And if the personality of Jesus Christ reveals to us the character of the One Supreme Being, then may we say again with Paul, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

The longing for an immortality that is to embrace the whole race, the desire for a personal immortality for the sake of the universal service which it opens to our souls, is not to be satisfied by mere information which some one may be supposed to possess on this subject. Such "information could be truly meaningful only to him whose soul is inspired with the longing for the infinitely worthful life, and such an one needs no information. Sufficient for him is the consciousness of an all-embracing love. For that nothing can annihilate. The certainty of the coming of that better world is a moral certainty and no other is needed.

I bring this thesis to a close with George Matheson's confession in verse of a faith which is my own:

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depth its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

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